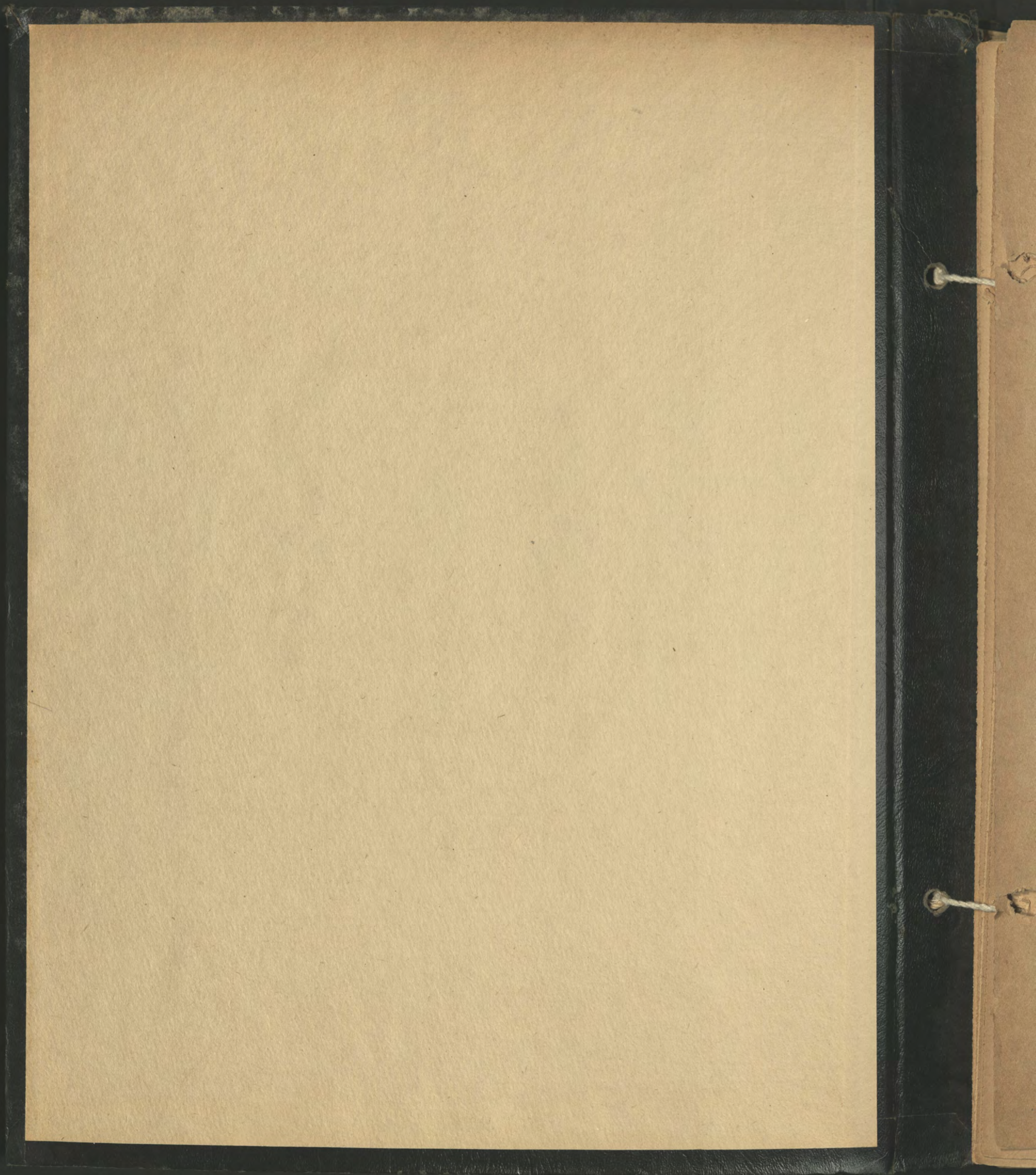


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Nantucket Historical  
Association II -  
Activities







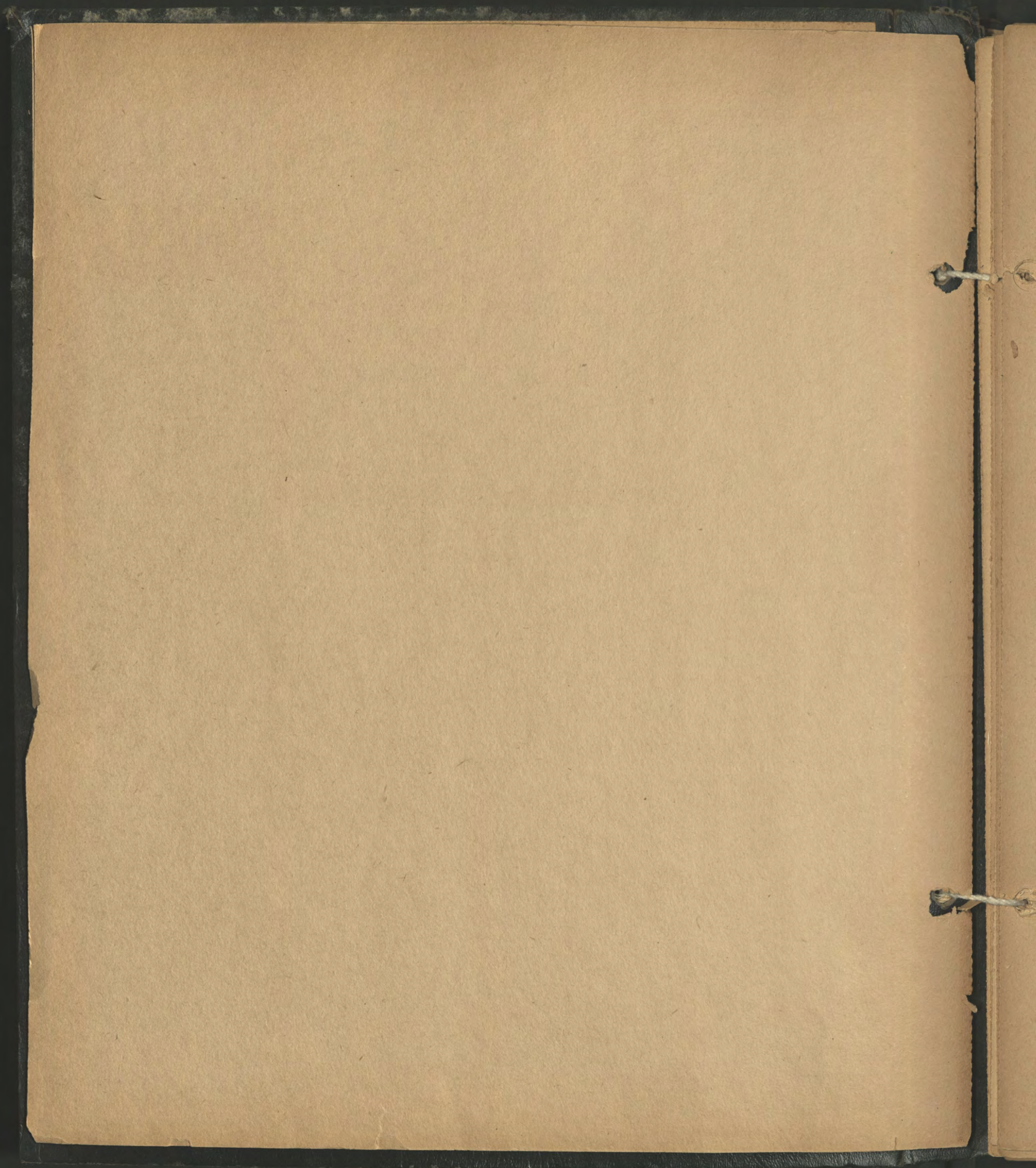
Grace Brown Gardner

Nantucket: Historical Association

II

Activities







### Nantucket's Tribute to Herman Melville.

Nantucket paid tribute to Herman Melville on Wednesday afternoon of this week, when at exercises held at the Unitarian Church, a large gathering of members and friends of the Nantucket Historical Asso. joined in a "Melville and Nantucket" afternoon.

The program was opened by an invocation by Rev. William P. Horton, pastor of the Church, who read several appropriate excerpts from that chapter in "Moby-Dick" in which the inimitable Father Mapple preaches his sermon.

"From the Look-out" was the topic of a short introductory talk by President Edouard Stackpole, of the Historical Association. That Melville was Nantucket's first great literary protagonist, and that his great classic bears irrefutable evidence of the admiration and kin-ship which the writer and man felt for this "isle in the sea," has made the literary world conscious of Nantucket's fame.

The speaker of the afternoon was Prof. Wilson Heflin, Dept. of English and History, U. S. Naval Academy at Annapolis. His topic was "Melville and Nantucket" and he brought into it all the wealth of research and of scholarship which has gone into his years of tracing the voyages of Herman Melville.

So far as is known, Melville's first and only visit to Nantucket came 99 years ago—July 6, 1852. Accompanying his father-in-law, Judge Lemuel Shaw, of Boston, who was to preside at the court to be held here, Melville boarded steamer *Massachusetts* and arrival was made here just after sunset. During his stay, Melville met several prominent islanders, including William Mitchell and his celebrated daughter, Maria, and Thomas Macy, whose presentation copy of "Macy's History of Nantucket," was generously loaned for this Melville Observance by Mrs. L. A. Chambliss.

The speaker traced the source material of Nantucket which entered into "Moby-Dick". This included the well-known "Loss of The Essex," meeting and "gamming" with Nantucket ships in the Pacific, conversations with such men as the son of Owen Chase, to whom he attributed the loan of a copy of the Owen Chase Narrative, and a number of other important factors.

Soon after Melville arrived at Tahiti on the New Zealand whaler, by which method he escaped from the vale of Typee and the Marquesas, he shipped on a third whaler and made the passage to the Hawaiian Islands. The identity of this third whaler was unknown until Wilson Heflin uncovered evidence in the consular files at Lahaina which proved the mysterious craft to be the *Charles & Henry*, of Nantucket, owned by C. & H. Coffin.

By working on a previous voyage of the ship, and by utilizing material which delineated the character of Capt. John B. Coleman, master of the *Charles & Henry*, Prof. Heflin brought out much detail which indicated the influence on Melville's subsequent writings which must have come from his cruise on this Nantucket whaleship.

## THE NANTUCKET HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Takes Pleasure in Presenting

A Program of

### "Melville and Nantucket"

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1951

Unitarian Church

3 p. m.

#### Invocation

Rev. William P. Horton  
Pastor, Unitarian Church of Nantucket

#### "From the Look-Out"

Edouard A. Stackpole  
President, Nantucket Historical Association

#### "Melville and Nantucket"

Prof. Wilson L. Heflin  
Dept. of History and English, U. S. Naval Academy

In the vestibule of the Church, on display in the show case, are first editions of Melville's "Moby-Dick," loaned by Dr. Walter Boyd, of Main Street, and Richard M. Lederer, of Polpis; a first edition of "Omoo," loaned by Mr. Lederer; first editions of "Typee," "Omoo," "Redburn," "Piazza Tales," and "Israel Potter," all loaned for this occasion by Mrs. L. A. Chambliss, of Main Street, and a presentation copy of Macy's "History of Nantucket," enscribed to Herman Melville by Thomas Macy (1852), also loaned by Mrs. Chambliss. Also on display is a photostatic copy of the crew-list of the whaleship *Acushnet*, with Melville's signature, as he began his famous voyage in 1840 out of Fairhaven, Mass.

The speaker made warm acknowledgment of help in his research tendered by several Nantucketers, notably Dr. William E. Gardner, whose ready store of knowledge has proven of considerable aid.

He concluded his scholarly address with these words:

"If Herman Melville, from his vantage point in the skies, should look down upon the troubled world which he left almost sixty years ago I believe he would find deep satisfaction in knowing that Nantucket Island had set a day apart in his honor."

\* \* \* \* \*

Greetings were extended to the meeting by Mrs. Elenor Melville Metcalf, of Cambridge, and Mrs. Frances T. Osborne, of Edgartown, granddaughters of Melville, who were unable to accept the invitations to be present. Word came also from Jay Leyda, whose book "A Melville Log," is to be published this fall, and who had also planned to be present but due to circumstances could not get to the island that afternoon.

The chairman also read letters of greeting from Tyrus Hillway, Secretary of the Melville Society, from Willard Thorpe, of Princeton University, a well-known Melville scholar, and Stuart C. Sherman, Jr., Librarian of the Providence Public Library, who is doing excellent work with a check list of whaleships.

\* \* \* \* \*

Among those present in the gathering, who were called upon to "take a bow," were Mrs. Florence Bennett Anderson, whose great-grandfather, Capt. Seth Pinkham (of whom she wrote in "Through the Hawse-Hole") spoke Melville's first whaleship, the *Acushnet*, in the harbor of Nukaheva, where he made his famous escape into the valley of Typee. When the *Acush-*

*net* was at the Gallapagos Islands, her crew gammed with the Nantucket whaler *Columbus*, under Capt. William Bunker Gardner, whose great-daughter, Miss Grace Brown Gardner, a vice president of the Historical Association, was also called upon to stand.

Miss Helen Wright, author of the biography of Maria Mitchell "Sweeper in the Sky," responded to the invitation to stand, as did William Tripp, Custodian of the Old Dartmouth Society's Whaling Museum in New Bedford, who came down just for the occasion. Mr. Tripp told of an incident during his whaling experiences in 1925 aboard the schooner *John R. Manta*, when a whale who had white flukes and a white under-body, was sighted off Hatteras, and of whom the mate of the *Manta* said, "always appeared in this vicinity."

Gilbert Wilson, whose paintings on "Moby-Dick" have recently hung at the Kenneth Taylor Galleries, was introduced and made a few excellent remarks touching on the symbolism and import of the Melville classic. Richard Purcell, custodian of the Old Mill, told the gathering that the name Nantucket appears in "Moby-Dick" 88 times.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the vestibule of the church was a show case containing a veritable treasure trove of Melville. Here reposed a photo of Melville and his autograph; a photostat of the crew-list of the *Acushnet*, with the Melville signature; first editions of "Moby-Dick," loaned by Dr. Walter Boyd and Richard Lederer; first editions of "Omoo," loaned by Mrs. L. A. Chambliss and Mr. Lederer; first editions of "Typee," "Redburn," "Pierre," "Israel Potter" and "Piazza Tales", and the copy of

"Macy's History" owned by Melville, loaned by Mrs. Chambliss, and photostat copies of letter dealing with the Melville visit to Nantucket and of the consular list at Lahaina, which proved Melville was on the *Charles & Henry*.

Dr. Walter Boyd generously offered his services and was the custodian of the case during the meeting.

Aug. 19, 1951

#### "Thar She Blows!"

The following is reprinted in its entirety from the editorial column of the Boston Globe, Monday, April 16.

It was Dec. 30, 1840. The ship *Acushnet* lay in the river of the same name at New Bedford signing on her crew for a voyage to the Pacific whaling grounds.

With a hinterland where railroads were building, with deep water channels and no shallow bar of sand across the harbor's mouth, New Bedford was seizing the lead in that profitable business of oil and bone, which her island cousin of Nantucket had perfected. The *Acushnet* tugged at her moorings in the stream. A brown-haired, dark complexioned youth stood quietly in the cabin waiting his turn to be called. When the ship's officer nodded to him, the youth stepped forward and wrote his name on the "list of persons" on the ship's articles. The name was Herman Melville.

Eighteen months later the *Acushnet* was in the South Pacific and anchored in the Marquesas. A water party went ashore and with it went Melville and Richard Tobias Greene.

Persecuted by a tyrant skipper and lured by the tropical charm of Nukahiva, the two young seamen jumped ship. For a while they lived among friendly natives. Then they were captured by cannibals and kept prisoner for four months. The crew of an Australian vessel finally rescued them, and two years later Melville returned to New York as sailor in a man-of-war.

Out of that voyage came Typee, Omoo, White Jacket and, greatest of all, Moby Dick. There were few, 100 years ago, who saw this greatness. The world as a whole was to wait 70 years and more before it realized that the story of the white whale was one of its literary masterpieces. Critics with sharp blubber knives are still busy "cutting into" Moby Dick and "trying out" the precious oil. Others marvel anew as they reread the tale. But few are they who read at all who do not know of Capt. Ahab with the ivory leg, Queequeg with the tomahawk pipe, the long harpoon and the embalmed head from New Zealand, and all that crew of "red, white, yellow, black and dusky men" who sailed aboard the whaler Pequod. Whaling voyage and voyage of a soul!

To create Capt. Ahab, Melville drew in part upon the captain of the *Acushnet*, who had driven him to desertion. Skippers of Yankee whalers were a hard lot, for the life of the whale fisheries was a hard life. Only the thrill and danger experienced in a



whaleboat fast to a whale — "a Nantucket sleigh ride," they called it — kept men away from their homes for three to four years at a time, overworked, poorly fed and paid only in shares of oil.

Profits provided the ships; adventure the crews to man them. New England whalers of the offshore fisheries sailed where nought had sailed before. Undiscovered islands in the Pacific they found and charted. They knew the sea and the coast of Japan before Perry. The bluff bows of their barks and brigs plowed north into the Bering Sea and south to Antarctica.

Many of their exploits lie in their old log books in museums and private collections, catalogued, but yet ungleaned. Memorable voyages and great disasters such as that in '71 when 30 whalers were crushed in Arctic ice, have been duly recorded. The great novel of the whale has been written, but not yet his full history.

On Nantucket island, a country newspaper printer and local historian has set out to write that history. It is to be called "The New England Whaleman: Discoverer and Explorer." Edouard A. Stackpole has never seen the Pacific, yet he knows the "far reaches of the great ocean" as well as he knows his way down North Liberty st. and Main street to the office of the Inquirer and Mirror.

"My chief qualification," he wrote the Guggenheim Foundation seeking a fellowship, "is my proven interest in the subject. My ancestors were among the early whalers in the Pacific. Their heritage is one of my cherished possessions."

Judges of the Guggenheim Foundation have found the venture sound enough to risk the capital. In August historian Stackpole sets sail on his life's chief voyage. The year was 1851 when Herman Melville finished *Moby Dick*. The year 1951 promises still another great account of the whale fisheries and of America in what was perhaps her most heroic age.

UNCLE DUDLEY.

Apr. 24, 1951

#### Exhibition of Paintings.

One of the most unusual exhibitions which the Kenneth Taylor Galleries has had in recent years is the Gil Wilson water-colors on "*Moby Dick*," scheduled for the week beginning Tuesday, July 31.

Gil Wilson has earned for himself an enviable reputation as an "artist-philosopher." To him, the essence of life is best interpreted through expressive painting, to become resolved into form and substance. In his treatment of "*Moby Dick*," he has portrayed in full measure the unique philosophy of the great book and its great creator.

In telling of his work, Mr. Wilson writes: "'*Moby-Dick* would lend itself well to dramatization by concentrating on the profound symbolism of the tragedy. It is, however, especially suited to a great color film, using actors and talent from all nations. Such a cultural collaboration could do much to bring the nations closer in a time of dangerous rift. Its arresting prophecy of doom, and at the same time its reaffirmation of man's transcendent spirit in his struggle against elemental destruction, might serve as a revealing allegory of man's predicament today."

July 28, 1951

#### Melville Centennial Exhibit at Princeton University.

The one hundredth anniversary of the publication of Herman Melville's novel "*Moby Dick*," is being celebrated by the Princeton University Library with an unusual exhibition, "*Moby Dick, 1851 - 1951, A Century of an American Classic*." The display will remain on exhibition in the Exhibition Gallery of the Firestone Library through December 15th.

Books, manuscripts and prints from the University's Special Collection have been supplemented by rare items lent from the private collections of Melville collectors and scholars. The Princeton display traces the inception and publication of "*Moby Dick*" as well as the fortunes of Melville's novel during its first century.

The exhibition begins with a brief evocation of Melville's life and family background. Melville's youthful travels in the South Seas aboard whalers and U.S. Naval vessels form the subject of the next group of books and manuscripts. Among these is the medical and surgical journal of the U.S. frigate "*United States*", on which the author served in 1843 and 1844. The log book takes an added interest from the fact that Melville's experiences aboard the frigate served as the basis for his novel "*White Jacket*", published in 1850. This novel is often credited with having hastened the abolishment of flogging as a punishment in the U.S. Navy.

Also on display are Melville's own copies of Thomas Beale's "*Natural History of the Sperm Whale*" and Owen Chase's "*Narrative of the Shipwreck of the Whale Ship Essex of Nantucket*."

"*Moby Dick*" was first published in London by Richard Bentley in October, 1851, and was titled "*The Whale*". In November of the same year Harper and Brothers in New York published the novel, under the title of "*Moby Dick, or The Whale*". Exceptionally fine copies of both the first English and first American editions are on display at the exhibit.

Programs, photographs and posters line another section of the exhibit, showing the many times that "*Moby Dick*" has appeared on the stage, screen and radio. Many photographs and old paintings of whales and whaling are included, with what Melville termed "monstrous pictures of whales" and "less erroneous pictures of whales".

There are also whaling equipment, scrimshaw, a model of a whaling vessel, and the jaw-bone of a whale, at the exhibit.

Nov. 10, 1951

#### The Winter Club Hears Talk On Melville and Moby-Dick.

On Tuesday evening the Winter Club met at The Woodbox, Fair street, with the host being Frederick P. Hill. The speaker of the evening was Edouard Stackpole, and his topic was: "Melville, Moby-Dick and Nantucket." Presiding at the meeting was Roy E. Sanguinetti, vice-president of the Club.

Launching his talk with a summary of Melville's life, the speaker went into a description of this outstanding American writer's seafaring career. He re-created the voyage of the Fairhaven whaleship *Acushnet* in which Melville sailed on Jan. 2, 1841, and from which craft he deserted at Nukahiva in July, 1842. He then traced Melville's subsequent experiences in the Australian whaler *Lucy Ann*—sailing to Tahiti from the Marquesas; hence his embarking on board the Nantucket whaleship *Charles & Henry* and his arrival at the Hawaiian Islands in May, 1843. Melville returned to America, arriving in Boston on the frigate *United States* in 1844.

The speaker stressed Melville's evident admiration for Nantucket which is so eloquently reflected throughout the pages of "*Moby-Dick*." He told of the author's use of two of the great Nantucket maritime dramas—the loss of the ship *Essex* and the mutiny on the ship *Globe*.

In conclusion, the speaker gave a few excerpts from "*Moby-Dick*," especially those passages dealing with Nantucket. An account of Melville's only known visit to the island was given, and the talk was brought to a conclusion with an imagined account of the possible meeting of Melville and a tragic son of Nantucket.

Refreshments in the unique dining room of The Woodbox brought a close to an "evening with Melville."

March 3, 1951



### Historical Nantucket Publishes A Magazine.

"Historic Nantucket" is the name of a quarterly magazine to be published next week by the Nantucket Historical Association.

The opening editorial says: "It will tell by word and picture the story of the Island's antiquity" and it will mark the entrance of the Association into its sixtieth year of activity.

The publication has one hundred pages and twenty pictures and maps.

The leading article is by Miss Grace Brown Gardner and presents the story of the call of the Association's President, Mr. Edouard A. Stackpole from the Island to Mystic, Conn., where he is now the director of the Marine Museum. The article enumerates Mr. Stackpole's contributions in leadership and expresses the Association's gratitude for his valuable leadership.

Other articles describe the gift of the 1800 House on Mill Street by Mr. and Mrs. Allan Melhado of Moors End and its restoration and furnishing by Mr. Everett U. Crosby; the restoration of the Walter Folger Astronomical clock; the catastrophe of the Old Mill followed by the rebuilding of the four vanes and the great axle on which they turn; the Whale of a Sale in Macy's store in New York in which loans from the Whaling Museum were displayed in the big show windows of the store.

Historic Nantucket contains the so-called "Proceedings" which have been published annually giving the reports of officers and committees, the financial statements and the gifts and donors this year over 100 in number.

The editor of "Historic Nantucket" is Mr. W. Ripley Nelson a member of the Council and the chairman of the Finance Committee. Besides the active work that he has put into the set-up of the magazine, he has contributed a very suggestive article on "Finances, Financing, and the Future" in which is made clear the growth of the Association with now seven buildings and their contents estimated at over \$200,000 value. This growth puts a serious responsibility on the officers of the Association to make plans for the future in which there shall be dependable and adequate resources to meet all needs. Mr. Nelson also makes clear that the preservation of these buildings and the work of the Association has a very important part in the growth of the popularity of the island.

The magazine is mailed to all members of the Association and is on sale.

July 4, 1953

### Historical Association Members Now Total Nearly 800.

One hundred eighty-three new members were added to the Nantucket Historical Association in the last half of 1953.

When Dr. Gardner became chairman of the Council, he said: "No family lives unless it has children—and an organization will lose vitality if it does not constantly work to secure new members."

Then he asked that the Council consider two suggestions, (1) that the first item of every meeting be the naming of twenty persons to be invited to membership, and (2) that, as 1954 is the 60th anniversary of the first meeting of the Historical Association, the Council aim to secure a total membership of 1,000—and go further by calling for at least one member in every family as evidence of the service given to the Island by the Association.

The total membership now is about 800, but the 183 added in the last six months shows the active work of the Council and the response that is being given to the appeal.

The new president, Mrs. Walton H. Adams, has given this project her first attention; not only securing new members by personal approach, but also contacting many who had allowed their names to drop from the list, but who were glad to be asked to resume active membership.

Mr. W. Ripley Nelson, as Editor, has planned and printed two issues of the new quarterly magazine "Historic Nantucket" which has won wide recognition as one of the most attractive bulletins of the many Historical Societies.

Dec. 26, 1953

### Nantucket Display at New York Terminal Building.



The above display, provided by the Nantucket Historical Association, may now be seen in the window of the Airlines Terminal Building, opposite Grand Central Station in New York. The window features Nantucket Island and is being shown through the courtesy of Northeast Airlines.

### Historical Association Assists In Advertising Nantucket.

"Fly Northeast Airlines to Nantucket" is the message carried for the past month to all who pass Northeast's office at 42nd Street, New York. A large oval front window located on the south side of 42nd Street directly opposite the Grand Central Station, one of New York's heaviest pedestrian traffic points, has been the scene of a special and unusually appealing exhibit advertising the best our Island has to offer from both past and present times.

The Council of the Nantucket Historical Association loaned Northeast Airlines an assortment of exhibits from the Whaling Museum. The selection was made by Mrs. Nancy S. Adams, President of the Association, and W. Ripley Nelson, Chairman of the Museum, in consultation with Mr. Douglas Hibbs, Northeast's District Sales Manager for New York area and Mr. A. Swett, District Sales Manager for Boston area. Mr. Hibbs and Mr. Swett made a special trip to the Island for that purpose as arranged by the Public Relations Committee of the Town of Nantucket.

The exhibits displayed included three whale models, samples of scrimshaw, an old sea chest, a blubber lamp, a log book, a ship bell, lances and a harpoon bent by a whale, all of which were identified by display signs. Two features of special interest were a picture exhibit of the signals of the Nantucket Whaling fleet 1788-1865 and an old print of a whaling scene.

A selection of Dick Williams' beautiful photographs of Nantucket told the modern day story through a well-planned arrangement with the relics of the past. A port and starboard light, placed at each side of the window, added seafaring color together with the white sand which covered the floor. Mounting guard over the exhibit and looking all window gazers straight in the eye was the colorful and well-preserved ship's figurehead of Richard Mitchell loaned by Mr. A. M. Craig for the occasion.

Northeast Airlines showed its appreciation through a sign reading: "Antiques from Nantucket Whaling Museum, Courtesy of the Nantucket Historical Association". In turn the Council of the Historical Association were glad to cooperate with Northeast and the Nantucket Public Relations Committee in presenting this unusually well-planned and dignified advertising of our Island. "Fly Northeast Airlines to Nantucket" the slogan carried by a large sign which topped the entire exhibit should help Nantucket's summer business and keep it one of Northeast's most heavily traveled passenger traffic airports.

Northeast is further advertising Nantucket by distributing the new leaflets "Main Street" edited by the Historical Association and published as a community project by the Nantucket Civic League, The Rotary Club of Nantucket, Nantucket Historical Association, and the Public Relations Committee, Town of Nantucket. The demand for this descriptive leaflet is growing steadily as the summer season approaches justifying the belief that literature of this type will fill a long-felt need.

May 29, 1954



## Photographs of Old Nantucket On View Through August 17.

A special exhibition of pictures of historic Nantucket is announced by the Nantucket Historical Association. The pictures, loaned and arranged by Mr. David Gray, Jr., are photographs taken of selected subjects found in the Historic Association's famous Henry Wyer collection of glass slides. The pictures, enlarged, developed, and finished by Mr. Gray, include views of the town, Nantucket Railroad, the old steamboats, famous Nantucket wrecks and old landmarks such as the Swain Farm at Polpis. Mr. Gray has done a great deal of this type of work as a hobby for a number of years and these pictures, which ordinarily hang in his home at Polpis as part of a large collection, are excellent productions. The exhibition will be continued through Tuesday, August 17, at the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street.

"Tristram Coffin's Dream of Empire" will be the subject of the sixth informal lecture in the series being conducted by the Historical Association this summer in celebration of its sixtieth anniversary. Rev. Clinton T. Macy will be the speaker. Born in Nantucket, the son of Hiram W. and Maud Thomas Macy, both born in Nantucket and of old Nantucket families, Clinton T. Macy is a direct descendant of Thomas Macy, who, in 1659, with his family accompanied by Edward Starbuck and Isaac Coleman were the first white people to live on the Island.

Clinton Macy has been a student of Nantucket History and, while serving as librarian at the Whaling Museum during his summer vacations while at college, made the most of the opportunity to collect interesting and valuable material which he has used from time to time in lectures and interesting articles. His lecture before the last winter meeting of the Sons and Daughters of Nantucket on the subject on which he will speak on Tuesday met with wide acclaim.

The lecture will be held Tuesday, August 17, at 3 p.m., at the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street. The Council extends a cordial invitation to members and the public to attend. Admission to the lecture is free.

## Historic Nantucket Homes Will Be Opened on Monday

Special to The Standard-Times

NANTUCKET, June 9 — All buildings and exhibits of the Nantucket Historical Association except the whaling museum will open for the season on Monday. Museum opened May 29.

The Oldest House will be presided over by Miss Ethel C. Clark, who will be assisted by a group of volunteer hostesses. It is planned that all will wear early island costumes as was done last year. Under the guidance of Mrs. Lewis S. Edgerton, chairman, further restoration work has been carried out in the first and second-floor east rooms. The Oldest House will be opened from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m. daily.

At 1800 House, Mrs. Susan M. Cowden again will welcome visitors. It is expected as the season advances she will be assisted by a volunteer group of hostesses. The house will be open weekdays only from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m. Mr. Everett U. Crosby continues as chairman.

### 'Miller' to Return

John E. Greene serves again as "miller" at the Old Mill. Jose Senecal, when resetting the veins this year, also put on the sails and once again the veins and grindstones revolve and the machinery work. The Old Mill will be open weekdays only from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m.

Chairman Burnham N. Dell is responsible for reconstruction of the cell bunks at the Old Gaol which this year is under custodianship of Mrs. Eliza King, association's first woman "jailer." A native-born Nantucketer who

knows stories of the jail, she will make visitors appreciate the hardships as well as the uniqueness of prison life in a four-cell jail built of logs. Old Gaol will be open weekdays only from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m.

### Museum to Open

At Fair Street Museum and the Quaker Meeting House, Mrs. Alma F. Backus will greet visitors as in years past. More than 20 years of experience together with knowledge gained from her family insures prompt answers to questions put to her by the many interested visitors. Upstairs, Mrs. Bessie C. Winslow, who for 20 years or more has helped many visitors with genealogies, will be sadly missed. Her many friends will be glad to learn that though health and advancing years prompted her release from scheduled duties, she still retains her interest in Nantucket genealogy.

Miss Alice Crocker will fill the position of librarian this year. Chairman Nancy S. Adams has brought in a number of items which are being prepared for exhibit. Fair Street Museum and Quaker Meeting House will be open weekdays from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m. and on Sunday from 2 to 5 p. m.

The Whaling Museum will have the same personnel as last year. It is open daily from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m.

Miss Bertha M. Eckert returns this year to serve as relief for the various custodians, receptionists and librarians so that each may have one day off a week during the Summer.

## Nantucket Historical Association Announces Eight Lectures.

Celebrating its sixtieth anniversary year the Nantucket Historical Association announces that it will conduct a series of eight informal lectures this summer on Nantucket historical subjects which should prove of interest to both residents and summer visitors. The lectures will be held at the Quaker Meeting House on Fair Street on Tuesday afternoons from 3 to 4 p.m. Each lecture meeting will be presided over by a member of the Association Council acting as chairman and also as host to welcome visitors.

The first lecture will be held Tuesday afternoon, July 6th, at 3 p.m. The speaker will be Mr. Leeds Mitchell and the subject of his lecture will be "The Story of the Association's first President, Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell". The speaker needs no introduction for he has been a prominent summer resident for many years and, as a son of Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell, his talk should be of real interest. Mrs. Nancy S. Adams, President of the Association, will act as chairman and hostess for the meeting.

The dates for the other seven informal lectures, the speakers and the subjects on which they will talk are scheduled as follows:

July 13, Mr. Everett U. Crosby: Nantucket's Silversmiths; Lightship Baskets, and Underground Moon (Model T).

July 27, Dr. William E. Gardner: Scribbling About Our Ancestors.

August 3, Mr. Burnham N. Dell: Quakerism in Nantucket.

August 10, Mr. Edouard A. Stackpole: Old Nantucket.

August 17, Rev. Clinton T. Macy: Tristram Coffin's Dream of Empire.

August 24, Miss Helen M. Winslow: The Folk Art of the American Whaleman.

August 31, Mrs. Nancy S. Adams: A Nantucket Whaleman and His Family.

It will be noted that July 20th has been omitted from the schedule. This is due to the fact that the Annual Meeting of the Association will be held on that day, with a special celebration of its sixtieth anniversary. Plans for this special event will be announced at an early date.

A cordial invitation is extended by the Association Council to members and the public to attend these lectures to which admission will be free.

## OPEN HOUSE DAY

The Nantucket Historical Association  
Invites the Public to Visit  
any or all of its Six Exhibits on

**Sunday Afternoon, September 21**

from 1 to 4 O'clock

Whaling Museum, Oldest House, Fair Street Museum, Friends Meeting House, Old Jail, and the "1800 House."

There will be no admission fee charged during the afternoon.  
Children must be accompanied by an adult.

June 9, 1954

Sept. 13, 1952

Aug. 14, 1954



## Ancient Folger Diary Discovered In Nantucket Attic.

Mrs. George W. Jones (Rozelle Coleman) working in her attic recently found an old diary written by her ancestor, Abiel Coleman Folger in Milford Haven, Wales during the years 1806 to 1811.

While this diary is a "line-a-day," the two thousand entries reveal the daily life of the Nantucket whalers who remained loyalists after the Revolutionary War and transferred their whaling interest to England and built the town of Milford Haven in Wales.

The two leaders of the migration were Samuel Starbuck and Timothy Folger. Timothy married, in Nantucket, 1753, Abiel Coleman and they had seven children before the Revolutionary War. The diary was written by Timothy's wife for her three daughters in Nantucket: Abiel, her first born daughter, Sarah, in the diary called "Sally" and Margaret referred to as "Peggy" or "PG".

That Timothy Folger was one of the most notable descendants of the first settler, Peter Folger is revealed by his portrait painted by Copley and now in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. He was a captain and owner in the Folger fleet of whaling ships, and a merchant of Nantucket with far reaching commercial and political influence in Halifax, London and Paris. Benjamin Franklin, who also was of Folger descent called him "cousin" and said "Timothy" was his best contact with Nantucket his mother's birthplace.

When Timothy, in Paris, heard of the birth of his last son, Benjamin Franklin said "Name him for me" and sent the baby, by Timothy, a delicate miniature of himself. This miniature has been preserved by the descendants of Benjamin Franklin Folger and is now in the possession of Mrs. Ardell Folger Armstrong, Sacramento, California.

One more and perhaps the most important fact about Timothy should be told: It was he who charted the "river in the ocean" the Gulf Stream, for the British sailors. Benjamin Franklin in London was approached by British naval men and asked; why were the Nantucket whale ships and colonial merchant packets able to beat the British ships from London to New York—sometimes by two to three weeks? Franklin put the question to Timothy and learned that the whalers knew the course of the Gulf Stream and when to use it and when to avoid it. By detailed study a chart was made and presented to the British navy.

In 1792 Timothy and Abiel Folger arrived in Milford Haven, one of the finest harbors in the world and perfectly adapted to the needs of a large whaling fleet. They came with thirteen whaleships and one hundred and eighty-two seamen expert in whaling.

This diary, written by Timothy's wife fifteen years after her arrival reveals a household well run by an industrious and conscientious woman. It shows the difficulties of getting and preparing food, the details of furnishing and keeping up the furniture and fabric of the household.

For quotations from the hundreds of "line-a-day" two subjects are selected that recur continually throughout the diary and best illustrate its scope, character, and interesting phases of the Nantucketer's life in Milford Haven.

One is Abiel's comments on her husband's interests and occupations. She always refers to him as "My H".

"My H bin on board tender to git a salor cleared."

"My H bin on a survey on a ship."

"My H birthday only one in four years". (February 29)

"Market Day my H brought veal".

"My H got a bad cold did not go to meeting he went to reading room to read the papers if he was half dead he would do that".

The diary shows that Timothy was a very important man in Milford Haven, that he met many difficult problems, and yet kept up with the issues of the time and always a helpful husband but not always easy to live with.

Another important and conspicuous topic is the neighborly relations of the Nantucketers, their frequent calls, "gams", dinners and teas.

The "social center" was "Castle Hall" a mansion favorably located by and occupied by Benjamin Rotch, son of William. After the French Revolution and life at Dunkirk, Benjamin came to Milford Haven to care for the Rotch interests in many whaling ships.

"Cousin Benjamin came in while we were at diner and took a lunch with us of veal cutlet and mince pye."

"Rode over to Castle Hall in my carr heard the charts had arrived in America was glad to hear." (The "charts" may have been the completed charts made by the British naval authorities.)

"Cousin Ben R sent over the spoons he bought (in London)."

"Cousin Ben R sent me a pigg."

"The Rotch family all over to tea."

More than one of these records end with "we talked Nantucket."

The diary shows Abiel's efforts to make a Nantucket-raised girl adapt herself to her husband's life and the life of England.

"Sixteen years this day we got into this harbor".

And the next day she wrote:

"Sixteen years this day I stepped my feet on welch land and a greivous day it was to me."

The Milford Haven whaling venture by Nantucket loyalists has not received as much attention as the migrations to Hudson N. Y. and to the Carolinas but it has points of interest which will increase as the present development of Milford goes on under the leadership of Milford Haven Urban District Council which is making a bid for tourists and holiday makers, and of the Milford Dock Company for repairing ships and providing new facilities for handling cargoes.

The Nantucket Historical Association, with the consent and cooperation of Mrs. George W. Jones has caused three copies of the Abiel Folger Diary to be made, one for Mrs. Jones, the second for the Association files and the third for the library of the Milford Haven Urban District Council.

The future of Milford Haven is interesting. Plans are going forward to make the old town, first built by Nantucket whalers, a holiday center and the remarkable harbor with new docks, a terminal for shipping.

The Urban District Council has issued a new Guide to Milford Haven in which are set forth the advantages of the town to holiday makers.

The Docks Company is investing over two million pounds in dry docks, wharves and facilities for handling cargoes from ship to the trucks and railroad.

These new possibilities and the history of the town are described in a new book: *The Story of Milford* by Sir Frederick Rees, published at Cardiff by the University of Wales Press.

Another recent book is *The Builders of Milford* by Flora Thomas and printed by The Western Telegraph at Haverfordwest, Pembroke, Wales.

In Edouard A. Stackpole's *Sea Hunters* may be found an account of the Milford Haven venture. It is well documented with special attention to the Nantucket Loyalist whalers.

Mrs. Rozelle Coleman Jones will tell the story of the finding of the diary in the March number of HISTORIC NANTUCKET which is mailed to the thousand members of the Historical Association; she will also describe the Coleman family on Nantucket before they left the Island and all their children and made their home in Milford Haven where they died and are buried.

Will Gardner

Feb. 26, 1955

## Quarterly Gives Story Of Wales Founding

Mrs. George W. Jones, descendant of one of the Island's original families, tells the story of pioneering Nantucketers in founding a whaling community in Wales, England in the current issue of Historic Nantucket, quarterly periodical of the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mrs. Jones, the former Rozelle Coleman, found a diary of a great-aunt Abiel Coleman Folger, for the period 1806-1811, in her attic, telling the story of Island whalers, Royalists of the Revolutionary War period, settling at Milford-Haven, Wales. The author sketches in background of the emigrating Nantucket families, the Coleman's, Folgers and Rotches. The diary was written by its author for her children in America. Mrs. Jones comments the diary leaves a reader wondering whether the author regretted her choice as a Loyalist in a foreign land with all her children but one in America instead of casting her lot with the Colonists.

The Historical Association Council has announced it will provide two annual awards to help promote the study of Nantucket history in the High and Vocational schools. The High School award will be for the best essay on any subject concerning Island history or achievements of Nantucketers. The award to the Vocational School student will be for a summary of Nantucket history, based on the "students' presentation and understanding of the factors and events materially responsible for shaping Island history".

Awards will be framed certificates with a winner's name and a description of each. They will be presented at High School commencement exercises. The award committee is comprised of W. Ripley Nelson, chairman; Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Joseph King.

The School Committee and School Superintendent Richard J. Porter have approved the awards as a stimulant to greater interest in Island history.

Apr. 29, 1955



## Historic Districts Commission Subject of Editorial.

The importance to the Town of Nantucket of establishing the Historic Districts Commission is editorial subject of the January issue of "Historic Nantucket", the quarterly magazine of the Nantucket Historical Association. The editorial which reflects the position of the Association, reads as follows:

The Warrant for Nantucket's Annual Town Meeting to be held February 13th will include an Article reading as follows:

"To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Chapter 601 of the Acts of 1955 of the General Laws establishing an Historic Districts Commission for the Town of Nantucket with all the powers and duties thereof as provided for and defined in the above named Chapter of the General Laws."

The presentation of this Article to the voters is the final step in the plan industriously worked out during 1954 and 1955 by nine local organizations which believe that Nantucket's future lies in the preservation of its past evidenced in its Main Street mansions, old gray shingled houses and historic whaling structures together with its winding lanes and cobblestone streets.

Led by the Nantucket Civic League, the Nantucket Historical Association, the American Legion, Rotary Club of Nantucket, Chamber of Commerce, Siasconset Improvement Association, The Real Estate Dealers, Nantucket Taxpayers Association, and the Firemen's Association initiated and sponsored this Act. Subsequently the Summer Courtesy Town Meeting by resolution expressed its approval and recommended acceptance of the Act.

Before the Legislature passed and Governor Herter approved the precedent setting act, the Supreme Judicial Court was requested by an order of the Senate to pass upon its constitutionality. In deciding that the Act could be legally enacted the Court stated in part:

"The definition of the purpose of the proposed Act as set forth in Pp. 1 is — the preservation and protection of historic buildings, places and districts of historic interest; through the development of an appropriate setting for these buildings, places and districts; and through the benefits resulting to the economy of Nantucket in developing and maintaining its vacation-travel industry through the promotion of these historic associations."

Commenting upon what Nantucket has at stake, the Court said in part:

"We may also take judicial notice that Nantucket is one of the very old towns of the Commonwealth; that for perhaps a century it was a famous seat of the whaling industry and accumulated wealth and culture which made itself manifest in some fine examples of early American architecture; and that the sedate and quaint appearance of the old island town has to a large extent still remained unspoiled and in all probability constitutes a substantial part of the appeal which has enabled it to build up its summer vacation business to take the place of its former means of livelihood."

The danger which Nantucket constantly faces and which threatens its future unless protected by a flexible law such as this proposed Act is recognized in the following words of the Court:

"It is not difficult to imagine now the erection of a few wholly incongruous structures might destroy one of the principal assets of the town..."

Briefly the Act provides that it is the function of the Commission to decide upon the appropriateness of the exterior architectural features of buildings hereafter to be erected, altered or restored in the Districts, keeping in mind the purposes of the Act, the general design, materials, etc., involved, especially in relation to similar features of buildings in the Districts so as to prevent developments obviously incongruous to the Districts. To this end, no building shall be erected, reconstructed, altered, restored in the defined Historic Districts in Nantucket and Siasconset until an application has been approved by the Commission as to exterior architectural features subject to public view from a public street, way or place. Further, no building or structure in the Districts shall be razed if, in the opinion of the Commission, it would be detrimental to the public interest. The erection or display of public signs in the Districts also is under the Commission's jurisdiction. Property owners are protected by a right to appeal rulings of the Commission to the Selectmen and to the Superior Court.

It is our opinion that this Act, if adopted, together with the Planning Board By-Law adopted February, 1955, will give the Town of Nantucket two laws which will protect its business — the vacation industry — and will bring the right type of business to the Island. The words of the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court should carry weight with our members in reaching a decision for they were prudent words, carefully weighed without prejudice and void of any pressure.

Feb. 4, 1956

## Grace Brown Gardner's Work In "Historic Nantucket".

Grace Brown Gardner, a descendant of one of Nantucket's earliest families, retired a few years ago after an active life of teaching which included a professorship at Framingham State Teachers College. Returning to the scene of her childhood and the family home, one of the four still occupied by the descendants of the original owners, she found an accumulation of treasures. Among them were many Nantucket books, pamphlets, magazines, manuscripts, old newspapers and clippings as well as maps, charts, and pictures of local scenes.

Not being willing to just sit and watch the world go by she has taken a vital interest in the life of the community. One of her principal activities has been to correlate the vast amount of historical material accumulated by her family. How she has done it, including the addition of contributions of many other persons who learned of her work, is told by her in a feature story, "My Scrapbooks", in the April issue of "Historic Nantucket", the Historic Association's magazine issued quarterly. Over 50 scrapbooks of Nantucket History are now available to the public for research and are being added to constantly. Their value is evidenced by the visitors who consult them, with a warm welcome from Miss Gardner at her home.

Two other feature stories are included in the issue, namely "The Great Hall" of the Atheneum, a history written by Frances P. Page which includes many interesting facts and amusing anecdotes. "Whaling Wasn't Everything" is a provocative article and a challenge for further research of Nantucket industries. Written by George A. Sanderson, it is hoped it will prompt others to indulge in research on a subject of which little has been written.

"Transportation" was the subject of the "Winter Gam" and readers will find much of interest in the report of the Gam. It includes stories unknown or forgotten by many from a fatal railroad accident and perilous steamboat trips to amusing anecdotes of the horse and buggy days.

"Historic Nantucket" for April is now being distributed to members and should be an incentive to many persons to become members for they may receive this quarterly magazine as one of the privileges of membership in the Association. Memberships taken out now will run for the balance of this fiscal year and that of 1957-58 ending May 31st, 1958. Why not become one of the family of members now numbering over 1,000 persons and participate in the work of the Association in preserving Nantucket's antiquity, its famed heritage, and the history of its illustrious past, and the noble part it took in the formation of our country?

May 4, 1957

## Museum Committee Member Appointed

Charles F. Sayle, Island ship model maker, has been appointed a member of the Whaling Museum committee by the Nantucket Historical Association.

The Association in announcing his appointment, noted that Mr. Sayle "in successfully carrying on his business of making ship models, has engaged in a great deal of historical research which it said equips him to render valuable help to the committee in its museum work." He fills the vacancy caused by the death of William H. Tripp. Other members of the committee are W. Ripley Nelson, chairman, Mrs. Kent K. King, Albert F. Egan Jr. and Henry C. Carlisle.

Considerable work is planned in the Whaling Museum before reopening in May, the committee stated. "The various tools, blocks, benches etc. in the five whale craft shops in the basement opened to the public last year, are to be treated with preservatives. They will then be somewhat rearranged and labeled as to what they are and for what they were used. This will add greatly to their display and educational value from the public viewpoint." The work was made possible by a "liberal cash donation from a loyal Association member", the committee added.

A collection of old charts of oceans of the world covered by the whales is owned by the Association. A number of them were used to record voyages and bear day by day dated notations as to weather conditions and other facts. Because of their age, the museum committee noted, most of them being over 100 years old, these charts must be preserved by rebacking. "It is hoped that it will prove possible to then display them in Sanderson Hall, using hinged leaves such as are now used to display the pictures of a whaling voyage", the museum committee said.

Jan. 16, 1960



### July 20th Is 60th Anniversary Of Historical Association.

The 60th Anniversary celebration of the Nantucket Historical Association will be held coincident with the Annual Meeting of the members on Tuesday, July 20, at 3 p.m. To provide ample room for the accommodation of those who may wish to attend the meeting will be held in Bennett Hall on Centre Street.

To especially mark this celebration the Association has met with rare good fortune in having the renowned poet, author, lecturer, historian, and teacher, Mr. Robert P. Tristram Coffin, of Bowdoin College, as the guest of honor and speaker.

Mr. Coffin has chosen for his subject "Nantucket and the Rest of America". A cordial invitation has been extended to members and the public to attend this meeting and celebration to which admission is free.

Robert P. Tristram Coffin grew up on a Maine saltwater farm, went to a rural red-brick schoolhouse, to Bowdoin, Princeton, and then Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar just before and after his two years in World War I. He taught thirteen years at Wells, in upstate New York and is now back at Bowdoin, as Pierce Professor of English. An authority on modern poetry, he has lectured on it at schools and colleges from Maine to Florida and California.

He has been on the staff of the Writers' Conference at the University of New Hampshire from its beginning, and has been Phi Beta Kappa Poet at Harvard, Virginia, Tufts, William and Mary, Randolph-Macon, Bucknell, etc. More than 200 American colleges have heard him read his own poems and talk about poetry, and more than that number of clubs and schools. He has reached over 100,000 people with his voice. He is as well known in Texas and Georgia, Indiana and Virginia, as in New England and the East. He has won many honors, including the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry. In 1945 he was elected a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters for writing of permanent value in American literature.

In addition to his poetical works, which include "One-Horse Farm", "People Behave Like Ballads", "Maine Ballads", "Saltwater Farm", and "Ballads of Square-Toed Americans", Mr. Coffin has written numerous volumes of prose. Among these, perhaps the best known are his books on Maine and his "Portrait of American".

Besides teaching and lecturing and writing, his three vocations, Mr. Coffin keeps in trim on his two farms—a saltwater one with a sea-captain mansion on the Maine Coast and a fresh water one on the Kennebec River.

It will be a great privilege for us here in Nantucket to hear Mr. Coffin speak next Tuesday afternoon.

July 17, 1954

## Nantucket Historical Association

extends a cordial invitation to members and the public

to attend the

## 60th Anniversary Celebration

and the

## Annual Meeting

of the members of the Association

to be held at

BENNETT HALL, CENTRE STREET

TUESDAY, JULY 20th at 3 p.m.

## ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

the renowned poet, author, historian, teacher  
and lecturer of Bowdoin College will speak on

"NANTUCKET and the REST of AMERICA"

ADMISSION FREE

### Nantucket Historical Association Plans 60th Anniversary.

The first event in the celebration of the Nantucket Historical Association's Sixtieth Anniversary year takes place this weekend when, as guests of the Association over 75 visitors are assembling here for the Annual Meeting of the Bay State Historical League which is being held Friday evening at Bennett Hall to honor the 60th anniversary of the Historical Association. The meeting, to which members of the Association were invited, will be reported in full next week including the "Nantucket Gam", a feature which follows the business meeting.

The Bay State Historical League, as outlined in a copyrighted brief historical sketch appearing in the July issue of "Historic Nantucket", dates from February 9, 1903, when John F. Ayer, President of the Somerville Historical Society addressed a letter to the Presidents of seven Historical Societies of Middlesex and Essex Counties to ascertain how they would regard forming a society of the 40 or more local historical organizations located in the two counties. For its brevity and clarity of purpose the letter which reads as follows is worth noting:

For the purpose of stimulating the interest in historical matters and to become acquainted with local organizations and what they are doing in the way of historical work, I would ask your opinion as to the advisability of forming a society composed of representatives from all the local organizations within the limits of Middlesex and Essex Counties.

Such a society, holding meetings from time to time, first here, then there—discussing methods or hearing papers read by distinguished guests, would waken an interest in such community and result in great good to the cause of historical research, and incidentally add to the membership and efficiency of the several local societies.

I have asked the opinion of several Presidents of near-by Historical Societies in Middlesex and Essex Counties and should favorable response be received, we can then invite all the societies to a conference to further consider the matter.

Favorable response prompted a meeting held March 13, 1903, with delegates representing 12 societies present. The idea met with approval and six of the representatives were appointed a committee to consider organization, scope, and area to be covered by such a society.

The Committee quickly reached favorable conclusions which they presented to a meeting held April 3, 1903, at Quincy House, Boston, attended by delegates representing 12 societies. The Committee's report, presented in the form of By-Laws was discussed, amended, and adopted. The principal amendment was to enlarge the society to a statewide organization and to adopt its present name.

The objects of the League, briefly stated, are:

1. To encourage the formation of historical societies.
2. To encourage the existing historical societies in prosecution of historical study and the dissemination of historical knowledge, in the institution and maintenance of historical memorials and anniversaries, the collection, preservation, and publication

of historical material, and to bring such societies into a closer relation with one another; and

3. Otherwise to promote historical interests.

From this simple beginning the League has grown until it now has approximately 128 member societies throughout the state. It exists because there is a need for an organization that brings together the local historical societies to acquaint them with each other, the results of methods adopted, and to strengthen and broaden the study of local history. A foremost reason for its success lies in the fact that it does not seek or desire to have power over, or authority to bind local societies or to do anything to lessen the local feeling on the strength of which their success depends. Its functions are advisory only.

Public meetings of the League are held quarterly at the invitation of members, in their various home localities. Unusually well attended by Society officers and members the meetings now feature a roll call of all present with a welcome to each by the President, Mr. Stacy B. Southworth of Braintree.

A bulletin, published quarterly, reports each meeting, membership news and items of historic interest. C. Nelson Bishop, the Editor, welcomes news items sent to 55 Lowell Street, Reading, Mass.

The League was selected by the American Association for State and Local History for one of its annual Awards of Merit for 1952-1953. It was selected in its area for the Class A award which is given: "To the provincial historical society or agency inaugurating programs of the greatest significance during the year." At the time of the award it was stated: "The 1952-53 program of the League has been a continuance of the work of past years and for bringing together more than 100 local societies, for stressing at each quarterly meeting the history of a specific area, for helping in the institution and growth of new societies, and in all of this the League is worthy of recognition." This award put a highlight on the League's colorful career being made in 1953 when it celebrated its 50th anniversary.

In 1906-07 23 societies, including the Nantucket Historical Society, Alexander Starbuck, Secretary, comprised the League, so when laying plans for its sixtieth anniversary what could be more logical than for President Nancy S. Adams of the Nantucket Historical Association to invite the League to help the Association celebrate by holding their Annual Meeting at Nantucket as guests of the Association.

June 26, 1954



## Poet Robert Coffin Entertains 60th Historical Meeting

A capacity audience jammed Bennett Hall Wednesday to hear Robert P. Tristram Coffin, author, poet and lecturer, speak on Nantucket and the Rest of the World at the 60th annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association.

Members and guests of the Association heard a report of last year's annual meeting from George W. Jones, secretary. President Nancy Adams told the audience that the treasurer's report, usually read at the annual meeting, would appear in Historic Nantucket, the quarterly of the organization.

Dr. William E. Gardner, vice-president, and chairman of the Council, announced his resignation as an officer of the Historical Association, and said that a report of the Council's activities during the past year would also be included in Historic Nantucket.

Officers elected for the coming year on a vote of the secretary were Mrs. Adams, president; Howard U. Chase, Everett U. Crosby, Burnham N. Dell, Miss Grace Brown Gardner, Mr. Jones, and W. Ripley Nelson, vice-presidents; Mr. Jones, secretary; Mrs. Elizabeth B. Worth, treasurer; and Ormond F. Ingall, auditor.

Mrs. Joseph King and Mrs. Mitchell Todd were elected councillors to serve until 1958.

Mr. Coffin, whose latest book, *One Horse Farm* brings his total of poetry volumes to 15 and his entire collection to 36, said that the people of this country have good cause to be proud of the accomplishments made during such a brief history. Three factors, he said, made these accomplishments possible.

First on his list was independence—"We had to be or die." There was no one to depend upon, he told his audience. "No one to lean upon but deity so they leaned hard upon themselves."

The Bowdoin College professor said that the second factor was expansion. "The early proprietors of Nantucket had to expand. They took the place of the Indian. The same thing is true of settlers in other parts of the country."

The third factor, he said, was the most important of all. "The fact that our people are mystical, a part of all the things in creation. We learned the forest as no European ever knew it. We were cousins to the wind, the rain and the bear. In Europe they could not understand our sense of brotherhood, but it was there in the beautiful paintings of Audubon."

The Maine author, whose books include *Lost Paradise* and *Portrait of an American*, said that the people of Europe like to think of us as a nation of gadget makers.

"The telephone never could have happened in Europe," he said. "The little villages didn't need it. The populations were always close together. They didn't have any communication problems."

Mr. Coffin, who for years has been talking poetry by word of mouth all over the United States, said that we have put a thousand years of history in one generation.

During his talk here before members and guests of the Nantucket Historical Association, he drew on his own poetry quoting from his well known *Collected Poems*, *People Behave Like Ballads*, *Poems For a Son with Wings*, *One-Horse Farm*, and *Ballads of Square-Toed Americans*.

Mrs. Adams, in giving the president's annual report said: "This annual summary of the activities of the Nantucket Historical Association is rendered with a deep feeling of humility."

"My earnest desire has been to serve the Association ably as has been done by our former presidents and it has been a constant challenge; however, I have endeavored to meet this challenge and I trust that the activities of the past year have shown that your president has been progressive in thought and action."

After a resume of the work done this year by Association members and a report of activities that included the publishing of leaflets describing Main Street houses, the Winter "Gam" series, visits by the president to mainland historical and an announcement that the Association now has 930 members, the president concluded her talk with a quotation from Shakespeare directed towards Dr. William E. Gardner, who announced at the meeting that he would no longer be active as an officer of the Association. Mr. Gardner is a past president and for many years has served as vice-president.

enduring of all religions, both primitive and civilized, believed that by using the best of sounds and the best experience of life gives something that men can live by; that it will give order to life that life never has.

"The poet shows how it is possible," he said. "Things don't end in life—nothing comes to an end."

"The world is full of Hamlets who never avenge their own fathers. The poet gets his death beautifully by bringing life to a point. He punishes the uncle, brother, wife—all whom God should have punished. The poet acts like the deity, because the deity refuses to do it."

"The kingdom of heaven is not far away as we sometimes imagine, but here in the yeast in a loaf of bread, a seed in the earth, in a little sparrow. It is not remote at all."

"Every child is an example of the kingdom of heaven because he believes in goodness and makes poisonous adults act with him. The kingdom of heaven is not an Oriental harem. It is a father holding his son by the hand."

## Famed Poet, Tristram Coffin Descendant Says Island Unequaled In Architecture

Robert P. Tristram Coffin has spent a good part of his life explaining the ways of the poet to man. In his lectures at schools and universities here in the United States and abroad, he has intoned the same persistent note: that poetry need not present an insuperable barrier to understanding; that instead of being necessarily

intellectual and cynical, it can and often is beautiful in its clarity and "as common as a loaf of bread."

In an exclusive interview this week with the *Town Crier* at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Burnham Dell, Mr. Coffin traced an Island ancestry which wound its origin in one of the early proprietors, Tristram Coffin who first settled in Newburg in 1642.

"He lived there for 18 or 20 years, before coming to Nantucket. His home was built in 1636 and I think it is one of the oldest wooden houses in North America. After he left it to his son, it became known as the Tristram the Younger House," Mr. Coffin said.

"The Coffins were always a seafaring family," he said. "They sailed with Drake and Raleigh during the great Elizabethan age. Their history goes back about 700 years. When they left Nantucket six generations ago, they stayed by the sea, along the coast of Maine."

"We still use a great many nautical terms. I used to say 'There she goes, all aflaking,' you know, to describe excitability."

Mr. Coffin has neither the ivory-tower pallor or the dark reticence usually ascribed to the poet. He has the ruddy complexion of a Maine farmer and his conversation, although rich with imagery, is as simple as a hired man's. His voice is low and there is a rhythm to the words as if he were conscious of meter even while speaking.

"For constancy in architecture," he said, "for beauty and independence, there is no place in the world like Nantucket. There was nothing planned. It happened partly by accident and through the influence of sailing people who built the ships and had a sense of beauty and line and mass. The homes are very much like some of the houses on the coast of Maine. And when you go inland there you find they are not so good."

"The sailing people traveled. Places like London, Liverpool, Trieste. They saw the Georgian architecture in London and had an opportunity to do as well here."

"And this is important. They wanted everything to be shipshape, well arranged and useful. Every bit of space was needed because the houses were made for big families. The houses were meant for use. One proof of that is that the modern owners have had to make very few changes."

Mr. Coffin, recently Fulbright Professor of American Civilization and Literature at the University of Athens, said: "For years I have been trying to tell people that we have been scared away from poetry because of its intellectualism and cynicism."

"I have tried to show in my own poetry that this need not be so, not in a militant way and in a less spectacular fashion than Sandburg, presenting poetry the way people experience it every day. Not in the manner of Hopkins or Eliot, but the way they themselves live poetry."

"My experiences have been the same, sitting up watching over a sick son, trouble in the night. Everyday things, that are as common as a loaf of bread."

"I have tried to show that the poet is not a paradox, a hermit, or a dweller in an ivory tower, but a man in the middle of life."

"Dylan Thomas wrote poetry that was sometimes obscure, probably the influence of Eliot and other moderns. It should not have been written that way because Thomas was a Welshman and those people are direct and simple. He certainly could write prose. It was as beautiful as poetry."

"In Thomas there is the same obscurity that is found in John Donne's early poems and the message that all men are brothers—that faith, beliefs suffer with logic and experience. You see, every child is a natural mystic."

"Herbert, Crashaw and Vaughan said the same thing. In Traherne we find that everything good—trees, flowers, sunshine, grass—are lost with the dirty propriety of ownership. Logic, reason, and experience have corrupted the child's natural belief that the world belongs to all. Reason and logic are naturally against this."

"Now this feeling was not shared as fully with Blake who felt that we could keep some of the intuitive knowledge that a child has. Blake believed in free love, but not everyone is as good as Blake was. It could never work."

Mr. Coffin, who is Pierce Professor of English at Bowdoin College and an authority on modern poetry, said he believed in the institution of marriage and the protection of ecclesiastical laws because "most men are unable to love discreetly or long."

"If everyone was as good as Blake," he said, "There would be no need for laws."

Contrasting the mystical mode of apprehension between the poets Gerald Manley Hopkins and Francis Thompson, Mr. Coffin said that where Thompson, particularly in "The Hound of Heaven," wrote with clarity and beauty, Hopkins is confused and inarticulate.

July 23, 1954



## Historical Association Elects Mr. Egan to Council.

Albert F. Egan, Jr., was elected a member of the Council of the Nantucket Historical Association at a regular meeting of the Council held Tuesday, June 15th. Mr. Egan, known to all his friends as "Bud" adds another Nantucketer by birth to the Council. In addition he enjoys the Coffin heritage through his mother, the daughter of the late James Coffin who was a much beloved and well-known citizen of 'Sconset. While "Bud" now resides in Nantucket it may be said truly that 'Sconset will have direct representation in the Council.

Mrs. Stacy Knopf presented her resignation as a member of the Council which was accepted with regret. As former Chairman of the membership committee Mrs. Knopf laid the ground work for the anniversary membership campaign and was responsible for securing many new members for the Association.

Miss Helen L. Winslow and Mr. Burnham N. Dell have been appointed Associate Editors of "Historic Nantucket" the quarterly magazine of the Association. W. Ripley Nelson, Editor of the quarterly, says that these two additions to the editorial staff will make it possible to broaden the scope of the magazine as contemplated for the future and that the Association is fortunate in having obtained their consent to serve.

Miss Winslow, a native-born Nantucketer, served as a member of the Council of the Historical Association for 3 years until 1952 when she resigned in view of her acceptance of a teaching assignment in the High School at Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin. In addition to teaching American History, Miss Winslow is taking her master's degree at the University of Wisconsin and during the summer months continues her active interest in Nantucket by serving as Librarian at the Whaling Museum, doing research work and helping the Association in many ways. An unusually well written and interesting article on "Scrimshaw" has just been completed by Miss Winslow for publication in the July issue of "Historic Nantucket" which will be distributed to members about July 15th.

Mr. Dell, a summer resident of Nantucket for 27 years, became a year-round resident in 1946. Extensive research and writing during the 20 years he served as a faculty member of Princeton University and since his retirement coupled with his keen interest in history, local, national, and international, his eight years of activity as Councilman and Vice-President of the Association, and seven years Chairman of the Old Gaol are just a few reasons why the Association is fortunate in having Mr. Dell join actively in the development of "Historic Nantucket."

The "Old Gaol", it is announced, has a new chairman for Mr. James A. Norcross, recently elected to the Council of the Association, has been appointed chairman to succeed Mr. Dell who asked to be relieved of his duties so that he might accept those of Associate Editor of "Historic Nantucket". Taking the chairmanship shortly after the "Old Gaol and House of Correction" were deeded to the

Association, Mr. Dell had charge of the restoration of the "Old Gaol" which required hours of careful application to match and refit rotted timbers but it was completed in 1948. During the past year he supervised the removal of the condemned House of Correction and with some of the old timbers reconstructed the bunks in the cell rooms of the "Old Gaol". While reluctant to relieve Mr. Dell the Association feels that with Mr. Norcross appointed as his successor, the chairmanship passes into the hands of one who will prove equally competent and interested in one of Nantucket's outstanding landmarks and one which represents the oldest type of New England penal institution.

The Annual Meeting of the members of the Association will be held on July 20th. This being the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the Association, President Nancy S. Adams plans that the meeting shall not be limited to the routine business of electing officers and hearing reports but she declines to divulge as yet what special plans she may have but she promises an announcement at an early date.

June 19, 1954

## Nantucket's Historic Districts To Be Protected by Commission.

Real progress in finding the answer to the problem of preserving Nantucket's greatest asset, its historic buildings, places, streets, and lanes, has been made by the group of civic organizations which have been holding meetings on this subject. The first step agreed upon by the representatives of the group, according to a spokesman, is to create an Historic Districts Commission and to designate the historic districts of the Island.

The purpose of such a commission would be to promote the general welfare of Nantucket through the preservation and protection of historic buildings and districts; through the development of appropriate settings; and through the benefits resulting to Nantucket in maintaining its vacation-travel industry through the promotion of these historic associations.

The creation of such a commission and the designation of the historic districts will require passage of a special act by the State Legislature. December first being the deadline for filing bills to be acted upon by the coming Legislature, the Island's Representative, Cyrus Barnes, has been asked to file such a bill.

Under such an act, the duties and powers of the Historic District Commission would be clearly defined. Generally speaking, the commission would pass upon the appropriateness of exterior architectural features of buildings and structures to be erected, reconstructed, altered, or restored in the designated historic districts, but only wherever such exterior features are subject to public view. The commission would also be required to pass on the removal of buildings and the erection of signs in these districts.

The commission would not consider interior arrangements or building features not subject to public view. It would not pass upon the occupancy or its use. It would not make any recommendations or requirements except for the purpose of preventing developments obviously incongruous to the historic aspects and surroundings of the Old Historic Districts.

These decisions were reached at a well-attended meeting of the representatives held last week. Also attending, by invitation, were representatives of the Town government, namely John L. Hardy, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, Charles G. Snow, chairman of the Town Finance Committee, and Roy E. Sanguinetti, Town Counsel.

The meeting was planned so that Norman H. Pothier, representative of the Division of Planning of the Department of Commerce of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, could attend. Mr. Pothier spent two days on the Island making a careful survey and the group benefited by his experience and recommendations as a Planning Engineer for the Department.

Ways and means and the advisability of establishing a Planning Commission for Nantucket were further discussed and are now under consideration with the view that definite recommendations can be made in the near future.

Further information will be given to the public about the proposed act creating the Historic Districts Commission as soon as the official wording is available. This will give ample opportunity for discussion and amendment, if needed. Such an act if passed would not become effective unless and until accepted by the vote of the Town.

The Firemen's Association is now represented in the group considering this problem. The group now consists of the Nantucket Civic League which originated this movement, the American Legion Post, Real Estate Dealers, Nantucket Historical Association, Firemen's Association, Nantucket Rotary Club, Taxpayers' Association, Chamber of Commerce, and the Siasconset Civic Improvement Association.

Nov. 20, 1954

## Photographs of Old Nantucket On View Through August 17.

A special exhibition of pictures of historic Nantucket is announced by the Nantucket Historical Association. The pictures, loaned and arranged by Mr. David Gray, Jr., are photographs taken of selected subjects found in the Historic Association's famous Henry Wyer collection of glass slides. The pictures, enlarged, developed, and finished by Mr. Gray, include views of the town, Nantucket Railroad, the old steamboats, famous Nantucket wrecks and old landmarks such as the Swain Farm at Polpis. Mr. Gray has done a great deal of this type of work as a hobby for a number of years and these pictures, which ordinarily hang in his home at Polpis as part of a large collection, are excellent productions. The exhibition will be continued through Tuesday, August 17, at the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street.

"Tristram Coffin's Dream of Empire" will be the subject of the sixth informal lecture in the series being conducted by the Historical Association this summer in celebration of its sixtieth anniversary. Rev. Clinton T. Macy will be the speaker. Born in Nantucket, the son of Hiram W. and Maud Thomas Macy, both born in Nantucket and of old Nantucket families, Clinton T. Macy is a direct descendant of Thomas Macy, who, in 1659, with his family accompanied by Edward Starbuck and Isaac Coleman were the first white people to live on the Island.

Clinton Macy has been a student of Nantucket History and, while serving as librarian at the Whaling Museum during his summer vacations while at college, made the most of the opportunity to collect interesting and valuable material which he has used from time to time in lectures and interesting articles. His lecture before the last winter meeting of the Sons and Daughters of Nantucket on the subject on which he will speak on Tuesday met with wide acclaim.

The lecture will be held Tuesday, August 17, at 8 p.m., at the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street. The Council extends a cordial invitation to members and the public to attend. Admission to the lecture is free.



**LEGAL NOTICE**  
**Call of Special Meeting**  
**of Members of**  
**Nantucket Historical Association**

A special meeting of the members of the Nantucket Historical Association is called hereby to be held Tuesday, April 10th, 1956, at 4 p.m., at St. Paul's Church Parish House, Fair Street, Nantucket.

- (1) To consider and act upon the request of the County Commissioners, County of Nantucket, Nantucket, Mass., that the Association release or deed to the Town or County of Nantucket a certain portion of the Association's land at the corner of Broad and South Beach Streets generally described as running twenty-nine (29) feet westerly on Broad Street from the corner of Broad and South Beach Streets and twenty-nine (29) feet northerly on South Beach Street from the corner of South Beach and Broad Streets being a crescent shaped piece of land with a maximum depth of twelve feet from the corner of the Association's property at Broad and South Beach Streets said land to be used by the town or county as part of the said streets and sidewalks incident thereto; and
- (2) To consider and act upon any other proposals, transactions and resolutions incident and pertaining thereto which may be brought before the meeting.

**Mrs. Walton H. Adams**  
President  
Dated March 30, 1956 Nantucket Historical Association

**Historical Association Meeting**  
**Votes Land Easement.**

At a special meeting of the members of the Nantucket Historical Association, held in the parish house of St. Paul's Church on the afternoon of April 10, a resolution was adopted authorizing the officials of the Association to grant to the Town of Nantucket an easement on a part of the land adjoining the Whaling Museum at the corner of Broad and South Beach Streets.

This easement was granted in order to give the Town enough land to widen the roadway at this busy corner. This should greatly facilitate the flow of traffic between the center of the Town and Brant Point. During the summer months the traffic at this point has often been seriously congested.

The proposed improvement is especially desirable at this time in view of the increased activity of Steamboat Wharf, when the new steamer "Nantucket" is put into operation.

Apr. 14, 1956



## Nantucket Historical Association Celebrates 60th Anniversary.

The Sixtieth Anniversary of the Nantucket Historical Association was held Tuesday afternoon, July 20, in conjunction with the regular annual meeting of the association. The highlight of the afternoon was the speaker, Mr. Robert P. Tristram Coffin, noted poet, author and lecturer, and a direct descendant of the first Tristram Coffin, one of the original purchasers of the island of Nantucket.

Bennett Hall had few empty seats when the meeting was called to order promptly at three o'clock by the president, Mrs. Nancy S. Adams. She welcomed everyone graciously, stating that it was most gratifying to have such a large gathering to help celebrate the anniversary of the association. Mrs. Adams announced that the business meeting would be brief and called upon the secretary, Mr. George W. Jones, who read the report of the last annual meeting.

As the treasurer's report is printed in the current issue of "Historic Nantucket", it was voted to dispense with the reading of it.

Dr. Will Gardner, chairman of the Council, stated that he would request that the reading of his report also be dispensed with, to conserve time. He said that he wished, however, first to answer two questions which he knew to be foremost in the minds of the audience: What is the function of the Council and what is its most difficult problem? He then went on to explain the duties of the members of the Council, telling how they meet regularly throughout the year to plan the work of the association and to try to solve its many problems. The most difficult problem is, as everyone knew, the financial one. He told of the work already carried out and of future plans, all of which require funds, and he said that he hoped everyone present would go home and re-write his will and take out his check book.

He spoke briefly of the untiring loyalty of the officers—of the numerous duties being accomplished simultaneously by Mrs. Adams, the president, Mr. Nelson and Mr. Dell. He then called upon Mr. Jones, the secretary, to read the resolution which he had prepared, requesting that the reading of his report be dispensed with and that it be printed in "Historic Nantucket". It was so voted.

In presenting her first report as president of the Association, Mrs. Adams stated that it was being done with humility, that she had the constant challenge before her of the work done by her predecessors. She thanked the Council members for their consistent loyalty and mentioned the regret felt by her fellow officers in the resignation of several of the members who had found it necessary to withdraw.

She touched briefly on the work done at the various exhibits maintained by the Association: the Whaling Museum, in its 25th year of existence, the installation of the sprinkler system therein, the enforced leave of absence of Capt. Wallace Long due to illness; the demolition of the House of Correction; the Old Jail, which has as its

chairman now Mr. James Norcross, Mr. Burnham N. Dell having resigned to accept the position of assistant editor of "Historic Nantucket"; the Oldest House and 1800 House, which are both in excellent condition; the Old Mill, and the Fair Street Museum, which with minor repairs will be good for another half century.

Mrs. Adams expressed appreciation to the custodians of the exhibits, mentioning particularly Mrs. Bessie C. Winslow, who has recently retired after twenty years as librarian at the Fair Street Museum. In considering the future of the Association, Mrs. Adams stated that the finances of the organization are in capable hands, the budget is balanced, and, because of the increased activity, it has been found necessary for the secretary to have clerical assistance and Mrs. Florence Vincent is filling that need. It has also been found necessary to secure the services of a public accountant and a counsellor at law. She mentioned briefly the new publication of the Association, "Historic Nantucket" and the excellent work done thereon by Mr. W. Ripley Nelson; the leaflet "Main Street Houses", sponsored by the Association in cooperation with several other organizations; the Walter Folger Clock, which is continuing to function properly under the supervision of Grenville Curtis, and various other items of interest to the members.

In bringing her report to a close, Mrs. Adams stated that there are now 930 members in the Association and it is hoped the 1000 mark will soon be reached.

The report of the nominating committee was presented by Mr. Alcon Chadwick, chairman, and it was voted that the secretary cast one ballot for the election of the following officers for the ensuing year: president, Mrs. Adams; vice presidents, Howard U. Chase, Everett U. Crosby, Burnham N. Dell, Grace Brown Gardner, George W. Jones, and W. Ripley Nelson; secretary, George W. Jones; treasurer, Mrs. Elizabeth B. Worth; auditor, Ormonde F. Ingall; council (until 1958) Mrs. Joseph King, Mrs. Mitchell Todd.

The announcement that Dr. William E. Gardner was retiring from active duty on the Council was received with regret by the Association. Mr. Everett U. Crosby requested permission from the president to say a few words, as follows: "This would seem to be a proper time for all the members of our Association to express themselves to Dr. Gardner. Therefore, a motion is here presented, that the following sentiment be adopted by vote of this meeting, and conveyed to Dr. Gardner by our secretary.

"The retirement of Dr. William E. Gardner, Dr. Will as he is affectionately known to a good many of us from all official connection with our Association, is our great loss. We have yielded to his request, knowing his reasons for so doing. For many years he has been a leader in our midst by reason of his exceptional talent, abilities and character.

"We have known and appreciated his vision, his greatness, endless endeavor, calm council, constant unselfishness and kindness to all. And, with

all this, an unfailing sense of humor, a fund of historic and, shall we say, fictional anecdotes. This is but a milestone and may we travel together as many more in years to come."

Following Mr. Crosby's resolution, Mrs. Adams stated that she was sure the motion was accepted without a vote, and spoke of the many parts in the Association played by Dr. Gardner, quoting from Shakespeare.

Then she went on to introduce Mr. Robert P. Tristram Coffin, the speaker of the afternoon, who was given a hearty welcome by the gathering.

Mr. Coffin, who is well known the world over for his literary achievements in the field of poetry and prose and as a noted lecturer, spoke most informally, delighting his audience with his rendition of many of his ballads, some of which had Nantucket as their subject. His subject, "Nantucket and the Rest of America", he said, "was an inspiration to the telephone when Mr. Will Gardner was talking to me the other day. I'm frank to say that I'm not sure exactly what I'm going to talk about even now. I think I feel some ideas coming on, but before I do say anything up that particular street of Nantucket and the Rest of America, I must . . . read a poem that Dr. Will has said is one of his favorites . . . on the subject connected with the many magnificent portraits you have here, especially primitive ones, in your different museums." Mr. Coffin then read a little ballad about the wandering portrait painters of America, who went around the country with a sample lot of bodies "to put your face on."

In speaking of his family, he said: "By the way, we have a very ancient history across the water as I discovered when I lived in England and got to know some of the Coffins over there . . . they stole the 'Tristram' to use on their own sons and so I stole their favorite boy's name right back, and it has been on a Coffin heir for over six hundred years, Richard . . . the debt is now evened up."

"What can I say about Nantucket? I can say plenty but I'm not going to . . . I can tell you perhaps some things you didn't know about—that my ancestor was the first man on earth to pass a prohibitory liquor law, for the benefit of the Indians not the white people, on the island of Nantucket. . . . He was a great man in many, many other ways. He was constantly getting into hot water and it was getting into hot water that he came to Nantucket, I think. It was an attribute of most Americans, the early ones, that they got into such hot water that they jumped high and far into hotter water farther on. . . . I think practically everybody in America, by the way, is related to him. I have no distinction in so being, but I do have the distinction of being only eight stairs down; most of my contemporaries are twelve and thirteen. But in eight strides we have covered the time of his coming until now. I think it is sort of an example of long-windedness or long-stridedness or something in the family that made it possible to cover so many generations so quickly.

" . . . Every war had a Coffin in the midst of it, having a reputation even before Nantucket of being in the middle of trouble." He went on to mention the famous Coffin Reunion of 1881, saying that he thought all the 2 or 3000 Tristram Coffins in the cour

try all got their name from that reunion. His mother also had several favorite men's names, "and I got the whole batch. . . . it so happened that my mother was also a Coffin, back two generations, so I got a double dose of family names and have always been proud of it, and proud of Nantucket, and I have written about it, and, by George, I feel a ballad coming on about the Island of Nantucket now, about my ancestors, the whalers of this island."

Mr. Coffin read the ballad, "The Square-toed Princes", following it with several others, interspersed with the Yankee humor found only in those whose roots are firmly imbedded in New England.

In connecting Nantucket to the "rest of the world", Mr. Coffin said that what Nantucket had done well, the rest of the world was quick to follow. He stated that he wanted to answer the question "What makes America tick?" and went on to prove his theory that it was by independence, expansion and mysticism that America—a new country—was able to catch up with a great many older civilizations. America had to be independent or die three hundred years ago; it had to expand because nothing in a vacuum can ever live; and he described what he called the "mysticism" as learning to live with the howling wind, the running waters, the great seas, the wild animals, and the wild Indians, and to learn from them the many things which formed the background of this country. He illustrated his points with many songs and ballads, reading them with feeling and giving his listeners a small idea of one of the reasons why he has become the famous writer and lecturer he is today. His ballads touched on whaling, schools, church, the old swimming

hole and other common everyday American things which find a spontaneous feeling of sympathy in those who read and hear them.

At the close of Mr. Coffin's talk he was given a rising vote of thanks and a hearty applause by the audience, who felt they had spent a most satisfying afternoon with the Nantucket Historical Association.

July 24, 1954



Celebrating its sixtieth anniversary year the Nantucket Historical Association announces that it will conduct a series of eight informal lectures this summer on Nantucket historical subjects which should prove of interest to both residents and summer visitors. The lectures will be held at the Quaker Meeting House on Fair Street on Tuesday afternoons from 3 to 4 p.m. Each lecture meeting will be presided over by a member of the Association Council acting as chairman and also as host to welcome visitors.

The first lecture will be held Tuesday afternoon, July 6th, at 3 p.m. The speaker will be Mr. Leeds Mitchell and the subject of his lecture will be "The Story of the Association's first President, Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell". The speaker needs no introduction for he has been a prominent summer resident for many years and, as a son of Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell, his talk should be of real interest. Mrs. Nancy S. Adams, President of the Association, will act as chairman and hostess for the meeting.

The dates for the other seven informal lectures, the speakers and the subjects on which they will talk are scheduled as follows:

July 13, Mr. Everett U. Crosby: Nantucket's Silversmiths; Lightship Baskets, and Underground Moon (Model T).

July 27, Dr. William E. Gardner: Scribbling About Our Ancestors.

August 3, Mr. Burnham N. Dell: Quakerism in Nantucket.

August 10, Mr. Edouard A. Stackpole: Old Nantucket.

August 17, Rev. Clinton T. Macy: Tristram Coffin's Dream of Empire.

August 24, Miss Helen M. Winslow: The Folk Art of the American Whaleman.

August 31, Mrs. Nancy S. Adams: A Nantucket Whaleman and His Family.

It will be noted that July 20th has been omitted from the schedule. This is due to the fact that the Annual Meeting of the Association will be held on that day, with a special celebration of its sixtieth anniversary. Plans for this special event will be announced at an early date.

A cordial invitation is extended by the Association Council to members and the public to attend these lectures to which admission will be free.

July 3, 1954

### Robert P. Tristram Coffin.

Mr. Robert P. Tristram Coffin, a descendant of the original settlers of Nantucket and world-renowned poet, author and professor of English at Bowdoin College, died suddenly Thursday evening in a Portland, Maine, hospital. Mr. Coffin was stricken while waiting to address a meeting of the Portland College Club.

Mr. Coffin, who was proud of his Nantucket ancestry, had written many ballads about Nantucket and her whaling captains. He was the guest of honor and speaker at the annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association in July, 1954.

Jan. 22, 1955

### Robert Tristram Coffin

Maine will miss you, Robert Tristram Coffin,

You—her champion and interpreter,

The great barns, the farms wading out to sea,

The mournful buoy by the coast, the pointed fir

Will wait your coming to be made into song.

The small boys will grow tall With none to tell of their growing,

Summer will follow Spring and burnish into Fall

And you not there to sing of it, You who saw beauty in all the things of earth

And in the daily round of humble lives

Dramas of pathos and of mirth, You who glimpsed tremendous splendors

In a fox's eyes and in the flight of birds.

In times of confusion we need your simplicity

And in the days of doubt will listen for your words.

Christina Rainsford  
Christian Science Monitor

Feb. 4, 1955

### Historical Association Meeting Votes Land Easement.

At a special meeting of the members of the Nantucket Historical Association, held in the parish house of St. Paul's Church on the afternoon of April 10, a resolution was adopted authorizing the officials of the Association to grant to the Town of Nantucket an easement on a part of the land adjoining the Whaling Museum at the corner of Broad and South Beach Streets.

This easement was granted in order to give the Town enough land to widen the roadway at this busy corner. This should greatly facilitate the flow of traffic between the center of the Town and Brant Point. During the summer months the traffic at this point has often been seriously congested.

The proposed improvement is especially desirable at this time in view of the increased activity of Steamboat Wharf, when the new steamer "Nantucket" is put into operation.

Apr. 14, 1956

### Historical Association Essay Winners Announced.

In the competition for the Nantucket Historical Association's two annual local history awards, four essays were selected by the High School and four sketches, "Historical Nantucket Buildings", by the Vocational School.

The essay "Nantucket Lighthouses", by Gerald Eldridge, won the High School prize, and the sketch submitted by Frederick Chase the Vocational School prize.

The awards made by the Historical Association were two handsomely engrossed certificates, in gold frames, bearing the name of the winner and a description of the award. These were presented at the school graduation exercises.

The other essays selected for consideration were by Maybelle Petumenos, Carl Richard and Bernard Russell. The other sketches were those of Richard Minstrell, Roboert Allen, and Philip Marks.

To further stimulate the interest of the Nantucket students in local history, the Council of the Historical Association has awarded each student whose essay or sketch was selected for consideration a one year membership in the Association. Letters have been written by Mrs. Walton H. Adams, President, to the eight aforementioned students welcoming them as members. These memberships entitle the holders to free admission to the Association's building and museums, to receive the quarterly magazine, Historic Nantucket, and to participate in the general activities of the Association.

Mrs. Adams, president, represented the Association at the Annual Meeting of the Bay State Historical League at West Bridgewater, on June 9th, as guests of the Old Bridgewater Historical Society.

The speaker at the meeting was Laurist W. Reynolds, who related the story of Old Bridgewater showing colored slides of the old town. William T. Shinnick gave an instructive talk on the land lay outs of early years.

June 3, 1956

### Nantucket Historical Association History Awards Presented.

The competition for the Association's two annual local history awards resulted in three essays by the High School and four summaries of Nantucket history by the Vocational School being selected for submission to the Association's award committee composed of Mrs. George W. Jones, Mrs. Joseph King, and W. Ripley Nelson.

The essay "Nantucket Newspapers (1816-1955)" by William Hoadley was awarded the High School prize. The summary of Nantucket history submitted by Kenneth Duce was awarded the Vocational School prize.

The awards were two handsomely engrossed certificates bearing the name of the winner and a description of the nature of the award. The certificates, in gold frames, were presented at the High School graduation exercises.

The other two essays selected by the High School for consideration were written by Erna Richard and Veronica Perry. The other three summaries of Nantucket history selected by the Vocational School for consideration were written by Donald Cahoon, James A. Duarte, and Richard Correia.

To further stimulate the interest of the High School and Vocational School students in local history, the Council of the Association decided at a regular meeting held June 14 to award each student, whose essay or summary of history was selected for consideration by the committee for the prize awards, one year's free membership in the Association. Letters to this effect have been written by Mrs. Walton H. Adams, President, to the seven aforementioned students welcoming them as members of the Association. These memberships entitle them to free admission to the Association's buildings and museums, to receive the quarterly magazine, "Historic Nantucket", and to participate in the general activities of the Association.

June 18, 1955

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**Nantucket Historical Association  
Announces History Awards.**

The Competition for the Nantucket Historical Association's two Annual Local History Awards resulted in three essays being selected by the High School and five summaries of Nantucket History by the Vocational School for submission to the Association's Award Committee composed of Mrs. George Jones, Mrs. Joseph King and W. Ripley Nelson.

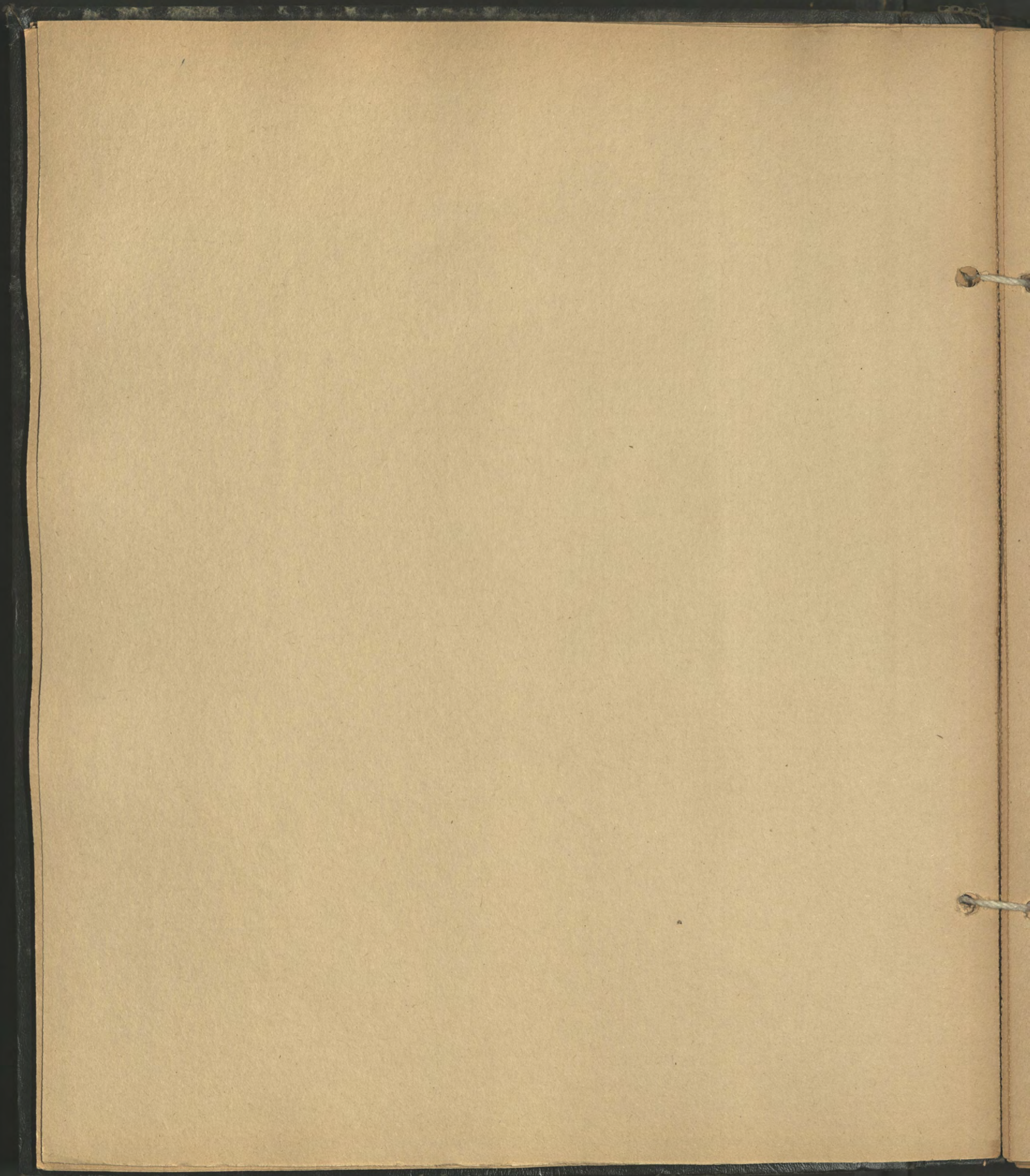
The essay "Railroads in Nantucket" by Sandra Fee was awarded the High School prize. The summary of Nantucket History by Frederick Chase was awarded the Vocational School prize. The Awards are two handsomely engrossed certificates bearing the name of the winner and a description of the nature of the award. The certificates, in gold frames, were presented at the school commencement exercises.

The other two essays selected by the High School for consideration were written by Betty Gomes on "The Camels" and by Betty Perry on "Quaker Meeting Houses." The four other summaries of Nantucket history selected by the Vocational School for consideration were written by Richard Minstrell, Lionel Starr, Everett Reith and Albert Ottison.

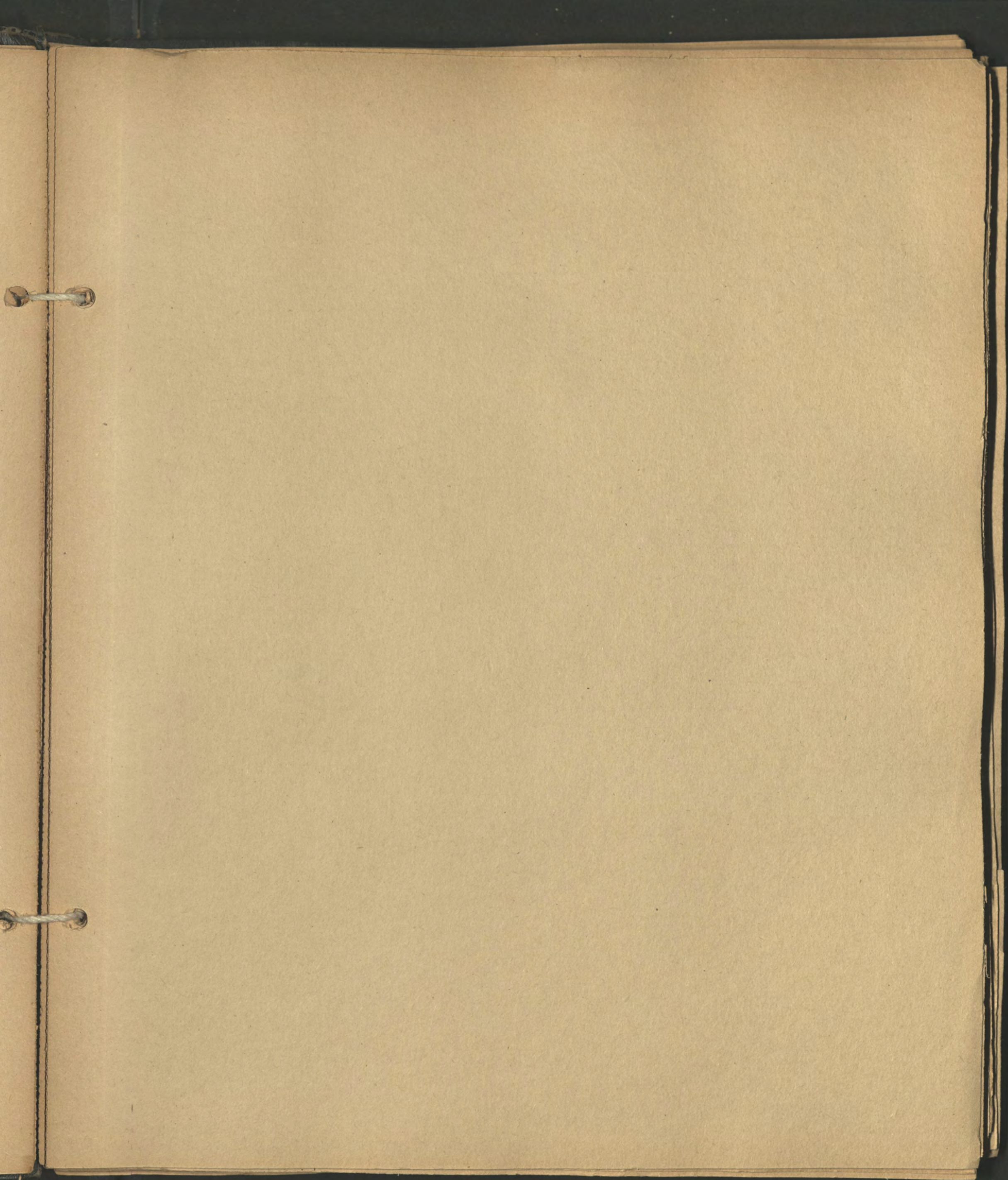
To further stimulate the interest of the High School and Vocational School students in local history, the Council of the Association decided at a regular meeting held May 21, 1957 to award to each student whose essay or summary of history was selected for consideration by the committee for the prize awards, one year's free membership in the Association. Letters to this effect have been written by George W. Jones, President, to the eight aforementioned students welcoming them as members of the Association. Those memberships entitle them to free admission to the Association's buildings and museums, to receive the quarterly magazine, "Historic Nantucket," and to participate in the general activities of the Association.

June 1957

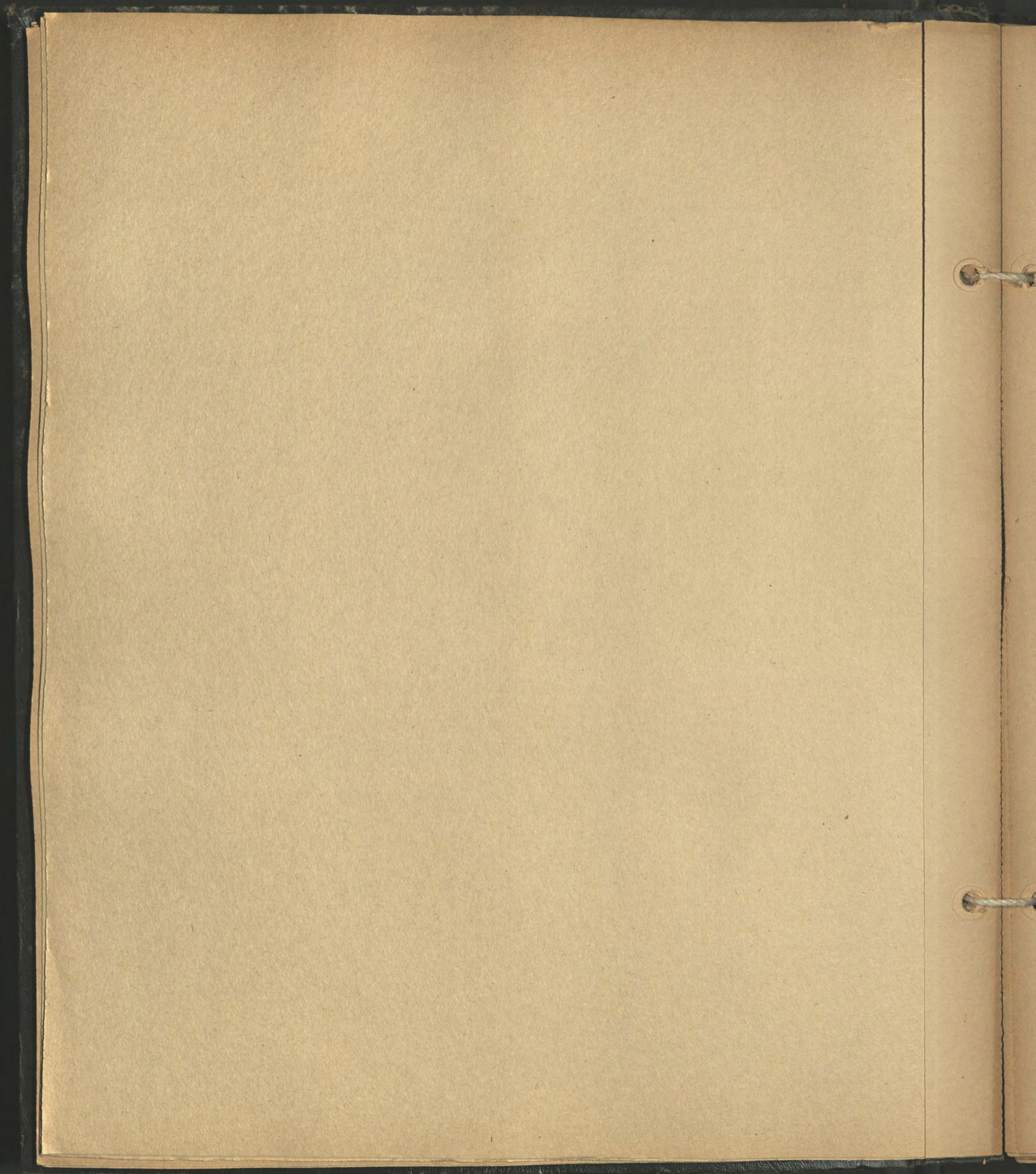














1954

SCHEDULE  
INFORMAL LECTURES  
Summer of 1954

- July 6 **Speaker: Mr. Leeds Mitchell**  
Subject: Story of the Association's first President,  
Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell.
- July 13 **Speaker: Mr. Everett U. Crosby**  
Subject: Nantucket Silversmiths; Nantucket Lightship  
Baskets; Nantucket Underground Moon (Model T)
- July 27 **Speaker Dr. William E. Gardner**  
Subject: Scribbling about Our Ancestors.
- August 3 **Speaker: Mr. Burnham N. Dell**  
Subject: Quakerism in Nantucket.
- August 10 **Speaker Mr. Edouard A. Stackpole**  
Subject: Old Nantucket.
- August 17 **Speaker: Rev. Clinton T. Macy**  
Subject: Tristram Coffin's Dream of Empire.
- August 24 **Speaker: Miss Helen M. Winslow**  
Subject: The Folk Art of the American Whalemen
- August 31 **Speaker: Mrs. Nancy S. Adams**  
Subject: A Nantucket Whaleman and His Family.

Sixtieth Anniversary Year

1894 -- 1954\*

For sixty years the Nantucket Historical Association has been devoted and pledged to the preservation of Nantucket's famed heritage and its illustrious past as a whaling port.

Its old rambling streets and lanes are still just as they "grew", some paved with their original cobblestones. The stroller finds Traders Lane, India Street, Tattle Court, Whale Street, Stone Alley running from Union Street "below the bank" to aristocratic Orange Street on the hill, and many other tell-tale names. Its hundreds of homes, many over two hundred years old, are not only perfectly preserved but truly livable today.

Where else in the world would one find a "Pacific National Bank" and a "Pacific Club" at opposite ends of the main business street of a town on an island in the Atlantic Ocean? You find them in Nantucket. Its Whaling Museum, Friends Meeting House, Old Mill from which signals were flashed to returning whalemen warning them of the presence of English privateers lying in wait, the old Jail, the Jethro Coffin House built in 1686 and the "1800" House together with thousands of exhibits greet the visitor.

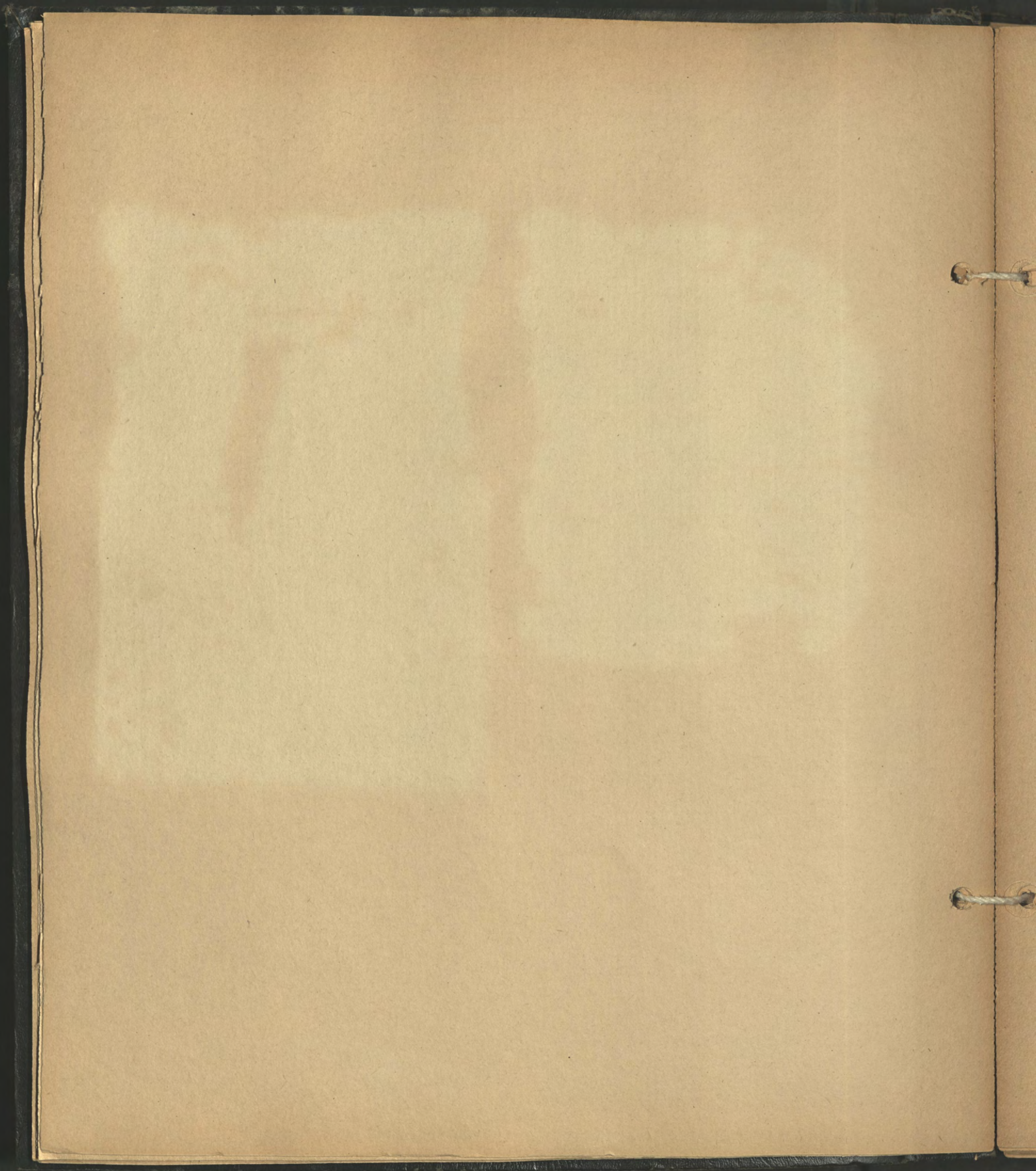
Such is Nantucket today, famed in American whaling history and a vital chapter in the larger maritime history of the world. Its simple unspoiled antiquity still offers hospitable living, happiness and health.

The map, on the next page, of part of the Town is a reliable guide for those who wish to ramble through the Streets and Lanes of the Town. The Nantucket Historical Association buildings and museums are located and numbered as follows:

Whaling Museum	Broad Street	1
Quaker Meeting House and Historical Museum	Fair Street	2
1800 House	Mill Street	3
Old Mill	Prospect Street	4
Oldest House	Sunset Hill	5
Old Jail	Vestal Street	6

The admission fee is 50 cents to each building except for the Old Mill and Old Jail where visitors are asked to give a donation







## Historical Lecture Series Opened Tuesday.

The first of a series of eight lectures, sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association in honor of their sixtieth anniversary, was held at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday afternoon. As stated in these columns last week, the weekly lectures will be held every Tuesday at 3 p.m., with the exception of July 20, which is the date of the annual meeting of the Association. They are open to the public, with no admission charge.

Mrs. Walton H. Adams, president of the Association, was chairman of the meeting Tuesday afternoon and introduced the speaker, Mr. Leeds Mitchell, whose topic was one close to his heart and to that of all Nantucket—his father, Dr. J. Sydney Mitchell. Mrs. Adams' welcome and introduction was as follows:

"Members and Friends:

"On July 9th, 1894, the Nantucket Historical Association was incorporated. This year we are celebrating our 60th Anniversary.

"In this building the first exhibition was opened to the public, continuing until the fire-proof building was erected in 1904.

"We have had in the 60 years only eight Presidents. Our first was Dr. J. Sydney Mitchell who was followed by William F. Barnard. He was succeeded by Arthur H. Gardner. Alexander Starbuck was the fourth President, then came William F. Macy, Dr. Charles E. Congdon, and Edouard Stackpole.

"These gentlemen, with the exception of two, all served till death took them from our midst. The two exceptions were Dr. Congdon, who was compelled by failing eyesight to serve only a short term, and Mr. Stackpole who resigned the office to accept the very important position of Curator of the Mystic, Conn., Marine Museum.

"From each of these former Presidents we have inherited much inspiration and to them we owe a debt of gratitude.

"One year ago as the famous Folger clock struck the hour of four the gavel was placed in the hands of your first woman president. My grandfather died at the age of 91, my grandmother in the 80's, my father at 85 and my father's sister still lives at 99½ years. You see I come from a long-lived family but I assure you that I shall not serve a 'life sentence', but only till someone of a younger generation can be found.

"We are honoring our past presidents by calling this 'president's day'. Nothing could be more fitting than to have a gentleman with us today, an ardent lover of Nantucket, interested in the history of our Island and a member of this Association, who is the son of Dr. J. Sydney Mitchell, our first president.

"It gives me great pleasure to introduce our guest speaker this afternoon, Mr. Leeds Mitchell, who will give you a glimpse into the life of his father, Dr. J. Sydney Mitchell."

In acknowledging Mrs. Adams' introduction, Mr. Mitchell spoke thus, revealing in his opening sentence the keen sense of humor for which he is known and loved in Nantucket:

"Madam President, members of the Nantucket Historical Association, Ladies and Gentlemen: Will Gardner has instructed me to add 'and Friends'. I have omitted this—I may not have any after this is finished."

Mr. Mitchell's lecture is given herewith.

Dr. J. Sydney Mitchell

First President of the Nantucket Historical Association.

This is the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the Nantucket Historical Association and since my father, J. Sydney Mitchell, was one of the principal founders and its first president for four years. I have been asked to give you a short story of his life.

He was born on Nantucket in 1839, the fifth child of Joseph and Sallie Folger Mitchell, who lived during the early period of their married life just below the Veranda House, opposite the Springfield House, just at the location where the Great Fire stopped in 1846 after destroying the Aaron Mitchell mansion.

Joseph Mitchell, my grandfather, was directly descended from Richard Mitchell, who was born in Brixton, Isle of Wight, near the coast of England, in 1686. He settled in R. I., but his son Richard Mitchell came to Nantucket and married Mary Starbuck, daughter of Jethro and Dorcas Starbuck, in 1731. The books say, "Thence came the right worthy Nantucket Mitchell family". Perhaps the Mitchell family became famous because Richard married a Starbuck, but my Uncle Peter Folger, father of Elma, swore a good deal and said to me, "Leeds, do you think I swear too much?" "No, sir," I replied, "you do it in such a kindly way." He said, "I'll tell you a secret. You know the Starbucks swear more than the Folgers, but not as well."

My father's mother was Sallie Folger, a direct descendent of the original Peter Folger, who settled here in 1663 and was the grandfather of Benjamin Franklin.

My father was very proud because he and Benjamin Franklin had the same grandfather. Joseph Mitchell, my grandfather, represented Nantucket in the General Court of Mass. being a member of both the House and the Senate. Therefore they lived in Boston, where my father completed his preparation for college, at Boston schools and Andover, Mass., winning the Benjamin Franklin Medal. He entered Williams in 1859 and graduated in 1863. He wanted to study medicine, so attended the Bellevue Medical College of New York City and immediately after graduation he began the practice of medicine in Chicago in 1867.

He was president of the Chicago Medical College and was chairman of the World Congress of Physicians and Surgeons at the Chicago's World Fair in 1893.

No one could have loved the island more than he, so he made every effort to build up enough practice to enable him to come to Nantucket with his family each summer.

He started in 1880 and that summer we all lived in Academy Lane, where the De-Witt Smiths are now.

In 1882 we lived with my Great-Uncle Peter Folger, brother of my grandmother, Sarah Folger, and father of Elma Folger, whom most of you knew.

For two summers we thoroughly enjoyed our stay at Peter Folger's home, 18 Cliff Road. I assure you, there was not one uninteresting moment. He was brilliant intellectually, had a great sense of humor and very popular and above all, he was the kindest person on Nantucket. His wife, Mary Coleman—he always called her "Aunt Mary"—said to him one day, "Peter, why did you leave that large ham hanging in the barn just where my head would hit it?" Peter said "I would not have wanted to hurt you, Aunt Mary, but our man is very poor. He is always hungry and needs food, and other things, so I hung that ham in the barn just where he couldn't miss it when he comes to steal the coal."

My father told me Peter Folger had more famous visitors than anyone on the island. Joseph Choate, the famous New York attorney, afterward Ambassador to Great Britain, would come down here even in winter to play chess and checkers with him and enjoy his company.

Uncle Peter was part owner in many ships and sailed around the world in some of them and took great pride in being well known in San Francisco, Honolulu, Valparaiso, and

Sydney and many friends from these cities visited him on Nantucket.

Charles O'Connor, the brilliant New York lawyer, who built the house now occupied by Breckenridge Long, was a frequent visitor. He persuaded Elma Folger to be librarian at his fine library on Nantucket.

I think Uncle Peter's closest friend was Eastman Johnson, the famous American painter, who lived next door to Sea Cliff Inn, one block away from Uncle Peter.

One day Peter had been sitting for Eastman Johnson to do his portrait and they both went some place for tea and left the portrait on the floor standing against the wall with face outward. Uncle Peter's pet dog, thinking it was his beloved master, licked off most of the fresh paint, but the painter did it over again.

He painted five portraits of Uncle Peter because he considered him such an interesting character. The portrait I like the best, and the one which is the best likeness, is in the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

Eastman Johnson had a young daughter, Ethel. Uncle Peter liked her. She had a goat and later on two goats and a cart and would come by our house with them. The goats would always balk and wouldn't budge when they reached our house, so Uncle Peter used to make me go out with him, and being a strong little boy, I was supposed to take the goats by the horns and yank them in position to go again. The goats wouldn't mind, but sometimes I got them to start going again. Uncle Peter said, "Ethel, why don't you call that off goat Daisy?" and Ethel said, "Why should I call it Daisy?" "Because some Daisy'll mind and some Daisy won't!"

In the summer of 1884, after Uncle Peter died, my father bought a house in Pearl Street, opposite the Thrift Shop. While there, my Dad influenced a great many Chicago people to spend the summers in Nantucket.

The following editorial appeared in the Chicago Tribune, dated October 16th, 1897.

"Nantucket is the best health resort on the Atlantic coast. A sojourn there is equal to a sea voyage, yet it also gives the comforts of home and enables one to escape the ills of ship crowding. It has no land breezes. The Island is only about three miles wide so that even the summer winds are always laden with the purity of ocean air.

"There is no suffering from excessive heat at any time. 86 degrees is usually the maximum temperature, and even then if one seeks a cool spot—always to be found—he will experience no oppression. For those exposed to the fierce debilitating heat of the west, from which there is sometimes no relief day or night, it is an ideal climate. Even for those who have to endure the heated terms of our large eastern cities it is a most grateful and healthful change.

"There are more days of fair weather than at any other point on the seaboard.

"For nervous prostration and insomnia—the American diseases—the climate is almost specific. A few summers at Nantucket convert delicate children into hardy ones. It is a good place for all in search of a natural sanitarium.

J. S. Mitchell, M. D."

My father persuaded quite a few of his patients to come down here for the summer. Among them were: John B. Drake, of Chicago hotel fame; R. W. Roloson, Packer, next in size to Armour and Swift; John B. Sherman, nephew of William T. Sherman, and his brother-in-law, Daniel Burnham, Chicago's greatest architect, and Mrs. Harold Peck. Mrs. Peck built a fine summer home, next door to the old Nantucket House, the most prominent hotel at that time. Mrs. Peck's home was located on Hulbert Avenue where Mrs. Atkins' house now stands.

She was made somewhat famous because her daughter, Marion, very beautiful, with titian hair, had her portrait painted by James McNeill Whistler. She rejected the painting and later wanted to buy it back. Whistler not only refused her request but destroyed the painting, which of course, was a great loss financially as well as to the art world.

The whole object in mentioning the names of these people is because I know they helped my father financially in other ways in fulfilling his dream for a great historical society for Nantucket.

I would like to mention one other: Mr. Charles Minchell. He had an editorial in The Inquirer Mirror in 1909 as follows:

"Let me relate an incident, an object lesson. Twenty years ago (1889) my father and mother first visited the Island, at the suggestion of Dr. Sydney Mitchell. They returned nearly every summer during their lifetime and naturally, some years ago formed the habit, which is chronic now. And now my children are building houses on the island.

"Who can say that Dr. Mitchell's suggestion in the instance related was not of great benefit to the island, for previous to my parents' visit the island was unknown in my part of the country (Terre Haute, Indiana).

"What Dr. Mitchell accomplished can be done and will be done by others if the advantages of the island as a summer resort are spread broadcast over the country."

I think this was healthy advertising for the Island and I hope we all continue to induce fine families to come to Nantucket.

The fame of Benjamin Franklin, William Mitchell and his daughter Maria, and of Walter Folger is known to all of you and my father was proud of these ancestors, but he thought some of his others were praiseworthy.

Jethro Mitchell, Aaron Mitchell, and Frederick Mitchell were each President of the Bank covering the years 1814 to 1848 and were all substantial citizens. At that time the Bank was called the Nantucket, Pacific Bank and in 1864, it was given its present name, Pacific National Bank.

From 1837 to 1861, William Mitchell was Cashier and Director of the Bank, and upon his retirement his nephew, Joseph Mitchell, my grandfather, was Cashier and Director until he died in 1885. Both of them resided during their respective administrations, upstairs in the Bank and, I think the second story of the Bank the finest home to live in on Nantucket. It was from the roof of this Bank that William Mitchell and his daughter Maria discovered the famous comet.

My Father's greatest ambition for Nantucket was not accomplished. The fact that the mother of one of the most distinguished citizens of our country was a native of Nantucket awakened in my father an intense interest in all that pertains to Abiah Folger, the mother of Benjamin Franklin. My Father wanted to determine where the home of Peter Folger, Abiah's father, was located on the land on Madaket Road, which Peter Folger, undisputedly owned, and my father wanted to build a duplicate of Peter Folger's home, which he felt would be of highest historic value to mark the site of the birthplace of the Nantucket woman whose son was the peer of the fathers of our country and whose name stands forever unsurpassed in the political, literary, and scientific annals of our nation.

I wish we could now bespeak the hearty co-operation of this organization and the Abiah Folger Franklin Chapter of the D.A.R. to secure, preserve and worthily mark and rebuild the birthplace of Abiah Folger, the mother of Benjamin Franklin.

To convince you how important the Mitchell and Folger families were, I have made every effort to have them graduate summa cum laude in your minds and now I want to talk about the most important subject: the Nantucket Historical Association and I think it is very fitting, in order to adequately describe the fine sentiment about the Association at that time, for me to read to you my Father's address at the 44th Annual Meeting of The Nantucket Historical Association on July 25th, 1898:

President Mitchell's Address.

The Association is to be congratulated that at its Fourth Annual Meeting such favorable reports from all its officers have been read.

Our pride in the work of the Association is unabated. We have this year, published our second bulletin,



and this, with number one previously issued, has given our Society more than a local reputation. It is a credit to those who have labored so faithfully, and devoted so much energy, ability and time to furthering its interests. As you have just learned from our Curator's report, we have had during the past year many additions to our collection, making it of still greater value. There is so much in the early history of Nantucket that is of interest, that everything bearing upon it should be carefully preserved. True the other New England Historical Societies have much in common, but we have many things unique, in no way identified with any other place, yet interesting in themselves to all antiquarians. Carlyle says the past is to be learned from not mourned over. So if we can contribute anything to education we need seek no other reason for being.

When we recall the high intellectual development on the island which was at its zenith when the commercial activity was greatest, the argument is helped that after all the human mind is chained to its physical environment.

When there were fifteen hundred Indians on the island whose diet was bluefish and cod, Indian corn and huckleberries, who were isolated almost entirely, communication with Martha's Vineyard and the Cape being rare; there was little change in them, doubtless for centuries. When the whites first came, the hard toil in a poor rugged soil gave scant remuneration, and we had resulting the austerity of the early New England character.

But when the whale fishery became lucrative and the town was a hive of industry, when trucks crowded the streets taking up the crude oil to be refined in factories, in front yards and back yards as well as about the heads of the docks, when our whaling captains took their ships further north than Sir John Franklin went and further south than Magellan ever sailed, when the names of all the islands of the sea were household words in our families, and our manufactured products were carried in merchant vessels to every civilized country, a new people sprang up. Then came luxury, the products of all climes were brought hither, houses were furnished with rich mahogany furniture, the finest china ware then known was in abundance here, and greenhouses like that of Aaron Mitchell, on North Water Street were extensive enough to grow large and delicious peaches.

It was at the height of this commercial activity that the environment of Nantucket was the whole world, and as we have seen, it was then that the intellectual development was greater than ever before or since. It is but fitting that we should cherish with more than ordinary care the mementoes of those glorious days gone by. Every New England town, in fact, every old town in the world, has a certain amount of local pride. It certainly seems as though we had a right to have more than the ordinary share. Let us keep up our society and the interest it has already had manifested in it so that it shall continue to be what it is now—the liveliest thing on Nantucket.

A fine organization like this Association cannot be created suddenly. It must blossom, bear fruit, and mature, and among those who were exceptionally interested in the growth of the Association were: Susan Brock, Elizabeth Swain Starbuck, Mollie Starbuck, and Alexander Starbuck. Following them were: Will Macy and Nancy Adams and later Edouard Stackpole and Will Gardner and Everett Crosby. All these and many others gave their unceasing efforts and were an inspiring impulse to the steady growth of the Association. Their influence and enthusiasm did much to promote the more than anticipated success it has since attained.

And on account of my Father's deep love of Nantucket and this Association I want to express my profound appreciation for what all these people have done to preserve the history of Nantucket.

If my Father could only be here today, I am sure he would say—You have created a splendid monument which all members of the Association and all lovers of Nantucket can look upon with admiration forever.

"The Story of the Nantucket Historical Association's first president, Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell," was the title of an informal talk at the Friends Meeting House Tuesday given by Summer resident Leeds Mitchell, his son.

The talk was the first in a series of eight informal lectures planned by the Association this Summer.

The speaker was introduced by Association President Mrs. Nancy Adams who told the audience some of the background of the Historical Association which celebrates its 60th Anniversary this year.

"We have had in the 60 years only eight presidents, our first being Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell followed by William F. Barnard. He was succeeded by Arthur H. Gardner. Alexander Starbuck was the fourth president. Then came William F. Macy, Dr. Charles E. Congdon and Edouard A. Stackpole."

Mrs. Adams said each president, with the exception of two, served until their deaths.

"The two exceptions were Dr. Charles Congdon who was compelled by failing eyesight to serve only a short term and Mr. Stackpole who resigned the office to accept a very important position as curator of the Mystic, Connecticut Marine Museum."

Mr. Mitchell told the audience his father Dr. Mitchell worked hard in his medical practice so that he could come each Summer with his family to Nantucket.

In 1882, he said, the family lived with his great uncle, Peter Folger.

"For two Summers we thoroughly enjoyed our stay at his home. I assure you there was not one uninteresting moment. In the Summer of 1884, after Uncle Peter died, my father bought a house on Pearl Street opposite the Thrift Shop. While there my Dad influenced a great many Chicago people to spend Summers in Nantucket."

Patients, too, came at Dr. Mitchell's suggestion. Some of them included: John B. Drake, of Chicago hotel fame; R. W. Roloson Packer, next in size to Armour and Swift; John B. Sherman, nephew of William T. Sherman; Daniel Burnham, Chicago architect; and Mrs. Harold Peck who built a Summer home next to the old Nantucket House.

"My father's greatest ambition for Nantucket was not accomplished. The fact that the mother of one of the most distinguished citizens of our country was a native of Nantucket awakened in my father an intense interest in all that pertained to Abiah Folger, the mother of Benjamin Franklin."

Mr. Mitchell said the doctor wanted to determine where the home of Peter Folger, Abiah's father was situated with the idea of building a duplicate.

## Grandson Gives Biographical Sketch Of Nantucket Historical Group's First President

"He felt it would be of the highest historic value to mark the site of the birthplace of the Nantucket woman whose son was the peer of the fathers of our country and whose name stands forever unsurpassed in the political, literary and scientific annals of our nation," Mr. Mitchell said.

The speaker said that Dr. Mitchell prepared for college at Boston schools and at Andover where he won the Benjamin Franklin medal. He graduated from Williams College in 1863.

"He wanted to study medicine,"

Mr. Mitchell related, "so he attended the Bellevue Medical College of New York and after graduation began practice in Chicago. Later he became president of the Chicago Medical College and was chairman of the World Congress of Physicians and Surgeons at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893."

Mr. Mitchell said his father was born in Nantucket in 1839, the fifth child of Joseph and Sallie Folger Mitchell. His grandfather was directly descended from Richard Mitchell, who was born in 1686. He settled in Rhode Island but his son Richard Mitchell came to Nantucket and married Mary Starbuck, daughter of Jethro and Dorcas Starbuck in 1731. "The books say, 'Thence came the right worthy Nantucket Mitchell family.'"

"My father was very proud," said Mr. Mitchell, "because he and Benjamin Franklin had the same grandfather."

He said his father once told him that Peter Folger had more famous visitors than anyone on the Island. "Joseph Choate, the famous New York attorney, afterwards Ambassador to Great Britain would come down even in Winter to play chess and checkers with him and enjoy his company."

"Uncle Peter was part owner in many ships and sailed around the world in some of them," Mr. Mitchell related, "and took great pride in being well known in San Francisco, Honolulu, Valparaiso, and Sydney."

He said Charles O'Connor, the New York lawyer, who built the house now occupied by Breckinridge Long, was a frequent visitor.

"I think Uncle Peter's closest friend was Eastman Johnson, the famous American painter who lived next door to the Sea Cliff Inn one block away from Uncle Peter."

"One day Peter had been sitting for Eastman Johnson to do his portrait and they both went someplace for tea and left the portrait on the floor standing against the wall with face outward."

"Uncle Peter's pet dog, thinking it was his beloved master, licked off most of the fresh paint, but the painter did it over again."

Johnson painted five portraits of Uncle Peter, according to Mr. Mitchell and one of them hangs now in the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

A friend of his father, Mrs. Harold Peck built a Summer home on Hulbert Avenue where Mrs. Atkins' house now stands.

Her daughter Marion, Mr. Mitchell said, was a beautiful girl whose portrait was done by James McNeill Whistler. "She rejected the painting and later wanted to buy it back. Whistler not only refused her request, but destroyed the painting which was a great loss financially as well as to the art world."

Mr. Mitchell said that from 1837 to 1861, William Mitchell was cashier and director of the then Nantucket, Pacific Bank. Upon his retirement, his nephew, Joseph Mitchell was cashier and director until he died in 1885.

"Both of them resided during their respective administrations in the second story of the bank."

A reading of Dr. Mitchell's address at the 4th annual meeting of the Historical Association July 25, 1898 revealed deep affection for early Nantucket.

Mr. Mitchell concluded: "A fine organization like this Association

cannot be created suddenly. It must blossom, bear fruit and mature. Among those who were exceptionally interested in the growth of the Association were: Susan Brock, Elizabeth Swain Starbuck, Mollie Starbuck and Alexander Starbuck.

"Following them were: Will Macy and Nancy Adams, and later Edouard Stackpole, Will Gardner and Everett Crosby.

"On account of my father's deep love of Nantucket and this Association, I want to express my profound appreciation for what all these people have done to preserve the history of Nantucket. If my father could only be here today I am sure he would say: 'You have created a splendid monument which all members of the Association and all lovers of Nantucket can look upon with admiration forever.'"

July 9, 1954

July 10, 1954



## Silversmiths, Baskets and Moons Subjects of Historical Lecture.

At the second in a series of eight informal lectures planned by the Historical Association this summer to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the organization, Everett U. Crosby spoke to a capacity audience on the subject "Nantucket Silversmiths; Nantucket Lightship Baskets, and Nantucket's Underground Moon (Model T)." The meeting took place on Tuesday afternoon, July 13, at the Friends Meeting House.

Mr. Crosby is a Vice-President and Council Member of the Historical Association, past Chairman of the Historical Museum and is at present Chairman of the "1800 House". After the publication of his book "Ninety Five Per Cent Perfect" in 1939, he was made an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects.

Dr. Will Gardner, author of the recently published book about Nantucket's famed citizen Walter Folger, Jr., "The Clock That Talks", introduced the speaker, after reminding the gathering that next Tuesday afternoon, July 20, at three o'clock, the Annual Meeting of the Historical Association will be held at Bennett Hall, with a talk entitled "Nantucket and the Rest of America" to be given by Robert P. Tristram Coffin, one of America's outstanding poets.

In his remarks about Mr. Crosby, Dr. Gardner said he felt it is better to know a man through his "doings" than to know him through what he says and what he writes, and that he proposed to introduce Everett Crosby with an exhibition of some of the things he has done. "This," he said, "is Mr. Crosby's first book, and he was way ahead of the later authors who felt that they should write books of a thousand pages. This is the 'Handbook of Fire Protection' which is still in use as the Bible of insurance and fire protection people. It was written in 1896. Then came 'Ninety Five Per Cent Perfect', an effort to make Nantucket aware of the value of the old houses. People weren't satisfied with one or even two editions of this, so last year they had to have the third edition. It stirred up the community a good deal," said Dr. Gardner, "and Mr. Crosby went before the Rotary Club and spoke to them about 'Our Gold Mine' which came after 'Ninety Five Per Cent'. More than that, he wrote a pamphlet about 'Nantucket's Changing Prosperity'. Still later he branched off into some of the Nantucket characters and published this book about Eastman Johnson. It is a beautiful book and has the paintings of Nantucket scenes and people done by Eastman Johnson. After that Mr. Crosby became interested in writing 'Nantucket in Print' and went through all files of Nantucket data and put together that which he has preserved for those of us who are interested in Nantucket history and documents. We never can thank him enough for this book.

"Then," continued Dr. Gardner, "it was time to talk about the weather, and the writing 'Nantucket Weather' appeared. About then Mr. Crosby became interested in writing about 'Books and Baskets, Signs and Silver of Old-Time Nantucket', after which he was very engrossed in making statements about religion, being a very enthusiastic member of the Laymen's Movement, and wrote two pamphlets 'God to Me' and 'The Scientists' Approach to God and Christianity.'

"Still not satisfied, Mr. Crosby found in an attic some old chromos which started him off collecting about 50 of them which are now on display at the Kenneth Taylor Galleries, and about which he published a booklet. I didn't know anything about them, and am fascinated with the process of making chromos.

"This is our chance this afternoon to come in contact with a man who is always doing something, and we like to hear him talk and read his writings."

Mr. Crosby preceded his talk by placing a large old hour glass before him, in order not to run over his allotted hour. He remarked that it was just another "Clock that Talks".

The discussion of Nantucket silversmiths covered the making of hand wrought silver by smiths working on Island from about 1700 to 1840, among whom were John Jackson, Benjamin Bunker, William Hadwen, George Cannon (or G. Canon as the name sometimes appeared), James Easton, Easton & Sanford, Frederick C. Sanford, The Kelleys, and possibly the Barretts, Samuel and Nathaniel. Although many S. Barrett spoons have been found in the old Nantucket homes, it has not been determined that any of the Barretts actually worked at Nantucket as silversmiths.

Silversmiths of Nantucket were usually very prominent, sometimes being surveyors or judges or proprietors of business establishments. They were making silver here up to about 1840 when factory-made silver began to come in. Spoons were the principal silver made here although they also made ladles, porringers, mugs, knitting sheaths, buckles, etc.

In order to identify early American silver spoons, Mr. Crosby explained in detail the use of the Style Chart, a copy of which had been handed to each person in the audience, and showed how one might check the important five points, namely the bowl, stem, drop, handle and handle decoration, in order to determine the approximate style period of the particular spoon being examined.

On the table at the front of the room was a large collection of Nantucket lightship baskets, many of them rare old ones and others recent reproductions. Mr. Crosby stated that the cooper was one of the most important men in the community, and some of them became prominent on the Island. It is interesting to observe the importance to the Island, throughout the entire whaling era, of the trade of the cooper. The oil of the whale taken at sea had to be promptly put into barrels, where it remained until the voyage was over and thereafter while stored and sold. Like barrels and casks, these lightship baskets had board "bottoms", and the vertical splints of the basket are still called "staves" and the circular top binding "hoops".

We do not believe that the making of this peculiar basket originated on the Nantucket lightship or the South Shoal lightship, in 1854, or thereabouts, but that the custom was taken to the ship by the officers and crew from Nantucket Island, where it is likely the baskets may have been made for a long while.

Crevecoeur, in his "Letters from an American Farmer", published in London in 1782 (but dated Nantucket, 1772) states the following under the caption "Peculiar customs of Nantucketers": "They have showed me a variety of little bowls and other implements executed cooperwise with the greatest neatness and elegance. You will be pleased to remember that they are all brought up to the trade of coopers, be their future intentions and fortunes what they may."

Mr. Crosby explained the process of making such a basket, starting with a block, generally cut from a spar and rounded at the top, after which he displayed a nest of baskets which were much prized, and which were usually 8 in number with the smallest one pint size and the largest 12 quarts.

There are now in the community at least two men making excellent reproductions of the old lightship baskets.

Last to be discussed was the subject of Nantucket's Underground Moon (Model T). "This tradition was kept alive by the late Harry B. Turner, who was editor of Nantucket's famed weekly paper, The Inquirer and Mirror. At least a couple of times during the summer season he would print in the paper the date of the forthcoming underground moon and then an explanation which had been handed down in the paper for decades, which just did not explain anything according to the understanding of most readers.

"When I joked with my friend Harry about it," said Mr. Crosby, "he always kept a sober face although he could not conceal the twinkle in his eye, and he said more than once, 'Why don't you write it up?' Ultimately I did so, and presented the findings in a paper to the Historical Association's Annual Meeting in 1941, sending a copy to Mr. Turner. He acknowledged it politely and said I would hear from him further, and so I did. In some two or three weeks he printed the occurrence of the next underground moon with the usual comment, and sent me a marked copy!"

What is this Underground Moon all about? The moon has four quarters: new, first quarter, full, and last quarter, of about seven days each. The moon is said to change when it passes from one quarter to the next. The Old Farmer's Almanac records two twelve hour periods in each day, the first from midnight to mid-day. From midnight to one a.m. is called zero hour and there is a similar hour from noon to one p.m.

The local traditions vary extremely whether to take the zero hour as the true and only moon phase or to take all of them, and also as to the definition of foul weather. Shall it be high wind only or rain only or both, and shall the foul weather period be only at the time of the changing phase or for a week thereafter, or for two weeks, as appeared in some of the traditions? A check was made on all these alternative premises with the result over the five year period of the test that no storm or even moderately bad weather occurred precisely on any of the true underground moon days, that foul weather occurred during the seven days following the true moon for only 14 per cent of the time, and for a two week period, calling

high wind and rain as foul weather with other occurrences, was but 17 per cent of the time. In following all four phases of moon change both day and night, the average for the five years was for a wind storm date to follow seventeen days after the moon date, or a combination storm or rain date to follow eight days after.

Leaving out much which was reported and of interest, the statement would up with this conclusion: "But one simple change is suggested for the tradition. Namely, to have it that the underground moon predicts good weather instead of bad weather."

July 17, 1954

Crosby 2



## Nantucket Silversmiths, Lightship Baskets And 'Underground Moon' Discussed At Meeting

Nantucket silversmiths, lightship baskets and underground moons were discussed Tuesday by Everett U. Crosby when members and guests of the Historical Association met at the Quaker Meeting House for the second in a series of eight informal lectures.

The speaker was introduced by Dr. William E. Gardner. Some of Mr. Crosby's books include "Ninety Five Percent Perfect," "God In Me" and the "Handbook of Fire Protection."

Mr. Crosby said that much of the early silver on Nantucket is easily identified as English handiwork. There were changes in spoon stylings through the years, particularly in the handle, stem and bowl, he said.

Spoons began to change again in 1770 and it wasn't long before such innovations as the downturned end, the coffin-shaped end and the fiddle back were introduced.

During the fiddleback period, the culmination of several decades, handle decorations, says Mr. Crosby, included the feather edge, the bright cut, and later the sheaf of wheat, the basket of flowers and the shell.

Early Nantucket silversmiths named by Mr. Crosby include: John Jackson, Benjamin Dunker, William Hadwen, George Cannon, James Easton, Henry, Edward, James and Allen Kelley. One unsolved mystery about these early silversmiths concerns a man named Barrett, who was supposed to have worked in 1760 or 1800. But no mention is made in the records of his craft here.

According to Hector St. Jean de Crevecoeur, who visited the Island in 1772, every young Nantucket man was given training as a cooper. Some of the early examples of this work were shown during the talk.

In displaying examples of early handiwork, Mr. Crosby mentioned W. D. Appleton and S. B. Raymond, who long ago made baskets on the Island. Other excellent workers mentioned were "Mitchie" Ray and Jose Reyes, who keeps a shop at his home on York Street. Two examples of fine craftsmanship were weaved by George Mackay, who makes the baskets as a hobby.

Mr. Crosby said the early cooper made his basket frame by sawing

up a spar. Then, he said, he cut a bore for the base of the basket, with a hole in the center to pin it to the block, and a groove around the outside.

Early bases were made of pine or plub tobacco boxes. More decorative models began with mahogany or walnut. Ribs of oak splints were fastened in the groove and rattan lacing was weaved in following the shape of the block. The bail handle was set in as the work progressed. It was bent to shape and then a double edge of oak was laced into place to finish the basket.

The underground moon, Mr. Crosby told his audience, was considered such a reliable indication of bad weather that seamen would not begin voyages, housewives delayed hanging washes, farmers put off haying, and carpenters threw up their jobs.

"As we all know, the moon has four quarters of approximately seven days each, the first of which is spoken of as the new moon," he said.

"Next is the first quarter followed by the full moon and then the last quarter after which we come to the next new moon."

"In the Old Farmer's Almanac, the day is divided into two periods of 12 hours and an occurrence during the first is recorded as of the morning and in the second as of the evening. From midnight to 1 a.m. and from noon to one p.m. is known as zero hour. A new moon at zero hour midnight is a 'true underground' moon."

After five years of study, from 1935 to 1939, Mr. Crosby deduced that the underground moon cannot "as defined" be regarded as a bad weather forecast, but may indicate fair weather. Weather Bureau records, he said, are still the most accurate basis for weather predictions.

July 11, 1954



## Ancestors Subject Of Historical Talk

Dr. William E. Gardner, Nantucket historian, told members and guests of the Nantucket Historical Association Tuesday that it is possible to know your ancestors if you are willing to look beyond the available dates and records.

In his own writings, he said, he gives what he feels is authentic characterization by interpreting the existing data so that the dialogue in his books, and the actions of the persons involved, although imaginary to some extent, might well have been said or done at the time.

Dr. Gardner's talk, "Scribbling About Our Ancestors," was the third in a series of informal lectures sponsored by the Historical Association at the Friends' Meeting House.

In his most recent book, the *Clock That Talks* and *What It Tells*, the conversation between Walter Folger and Ralph Waldo Emerson, although unrecorded, was probably concerned with the issues the two men were most concerned with during that period, he said.

"The conversation," Dr. Gardner told his audience, "was based on certain facts. The ideas that Emerson expressed could be found in his diaries. The records could tell us what was going on in the minds of the men during that time."

A more personal illustration of fact interpretation was brought out in his description of the courtship of Joseph Starbuck and a young Gardner girl.

There was no reliable data, he said, but through account books kept by the Starbuck he discovered that at the age of 15 Joseph began buying fancy handkerchiefs. The purchase of a striped shirt was recorded on another date. The records and the fact that he was seeing the Gardner girl indicated to Dr. Gardner that a typical Island courtship was going on. Through his knowledge of the manners and customs of the time, he was able to imagine what might have taken place.

The Nantucket historian used the same method to describe the courtship of Anna Ray and Walter Folger. Both, he said, would have been required to appear before meetings of the Friends and declare their intentions.

Of great importance to the work of the writer, historian, or genealogical student are the mass of records, ledgers, papers, letters and diaries that have been gathered and indexed by the Historical Association.

Dr. Gardner in his talk explained how they are used to track down historical incidents, births, deaths, marriages so that an accurate picture can be drawn of the period and the people involved.

He said that in this way, through the use of available records and the interpretation of historical facts we could get to know our ancestors. Many persons are satisfied with only the record. It is possible to know much more, he said.

Dr. Gardner also explained how the Historical Association responds to requests on information received through the mails, and from visitors to the Association's exhibits. He described the carefully indexed historical data, the four volumes of vital statistics, and the records of Friends' meetings.

The speaker was introduced by Henry C. Carlisle, great-grandson of Zenas Coffin and grandson of Henry Coffin.

July 30, 1954

### Ancestral "Scribbling" Exciting, "Will" Gardner Says.

"Scribbling about our ancestors can be rewarding and as exciting as any mystery story," said Dr. William E. Gardner, featured speaker at the most recent afternoon lecture held in the Old Friends' Meeting House under the sponsorship of the Nantucket Historical Association. Descendant of proprietor John Gardner and author of three portrait biographies from the Coffin, Folger, and Starbuck families of Nantucket—"Coffin Saga", "The Clock That Talks", and "Three Bricks and Three Brothers"—Dr. "Will" can speak with some authority on this subject.

Since having written about these early Nantucketers, he has received innumerable letters and many visits from descendants, captivated by "ancestor worship" and anxious to unravel the mysteries of their genealogy. Dr. Gardner recalled with amusement a copy of "Coffin Saga" which he has treasured since its return with a request for refund and the complaint that the reader had expected a "who-dunit".

A more satisfactory experience was an unexpected visit from California descendants of Joseph Starbuck who developed a desire to explore the setting for "Three Bricks and Three Brothers". Dr. Gardner said he recognized the visitors immediately as Starbuck from their characteristically long, pointed faces, and clear blue eyes.

Dr. Gardner listed in some detail the material which the Nantucket Historical Association makes available at its Fair Street Museum to persons interested in finding out about their ancestors. He exhibited a book of early Nantucket deeds, some written in the Indian language. The ledger of schoolmaster Benjamin Coffin, indexed by Dr. Gardner, testifies to the literacy of island sons. Valuable information can be found in the Barney papers, the Folger genealogies, the vital statistics of births, marriages, and deaths, Starbuck's "History of Nantucket" which contains an appendix of genealogical data, diaries, and letters. Records of the men's and women's meetings of the Society of Friends contain the appearances of young men and women to speak of their plans

to marry, the reports of committees to investigate the "clearness" of these intentions, and the official marriage certificates with the signatures of bride, groom, and witnesses. A valuable diary in the collection is that of Keziah Coffin Fanning, now appearing in serial form in "Historic Nantucket", quarterly publication of the Association. The notations are terse, nonetheless they provide important genealogical clues about Nantucket in Revolutionary times. "Census" books were also kept on the island for convenience in conversation about family relationships. The Association's collection contains nearly a hundred books. In doing research on Joseph Starbuck, Dr. Gardner said that he used these books to learn the members of the whaling merchant's household, including the housekeeper and hired man, by a cross reference of name and date. These items are all important tools of genealogical research, said Dr. Gardner.

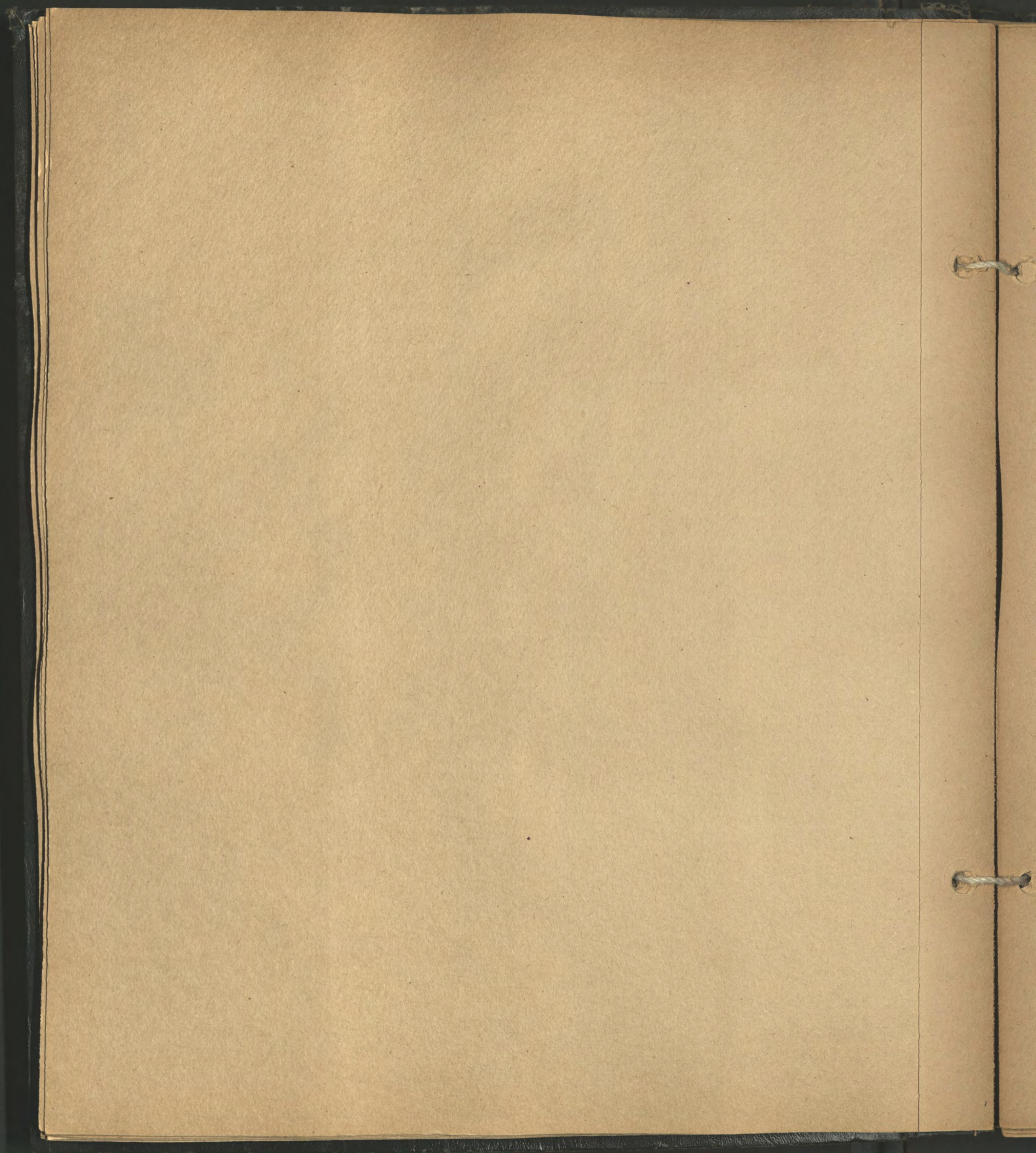
One of the fascinations of studying one's antecedents, Dr. Gardner finds, is examining them in the light of posterity and tracing inherited characteristics in successive generations. This, he believes, to be a mystery begun by God and continued by man. What influence the findings of scientific research on the propagation of lesser forms of plant and animal life will someday have at the human level, he does not predict, but believes this to be a question for consideration.

But, he continued, having read the record, "have you met your ancestors?" Dr. Gardner emphasized the personal basis of genealogy which is so commonly ignored by statistics and welcomed the trend in historical biography which such writers as Catherine Drinker Bowen and Esther Forbes have established by weaving a plausible human story around authentic data. He quoted Stephen Leacock—"facts are very uncomfortable companions . . . facts alone are in disrepute". He then explained how he had put his ideas into practice through his own writings. A part of his frame of reference for portraying the courtship of Joseph Starbuck invested in fancy handkerchiefs, a striped shirt, a new watch, and socks with "clocks". Believing strongly in the "illuminated biography", Dr. Gardner developed an imaginary but plausible conversation in "The Clock That Talks" between ex-Congressman Walter Folger and the Rev. Ralph Waldo Emerson from a knowledge of the times in which they lived and thoughts expressed by Emerson in his journals and letters.

In conclusion Dr. Gardner advised persons interested in their ancestors to exercise care in gathering names, dates, and interesting facts, and, above all, to have a good time. He urged, "Don't meet the records only; meet your ancestors!"

Moderator for the afternoon was Henry C. Carlisle who introduced the speaker, touching upon their friendship and lengthy correspondence in past years concerning his Coffin ancestry. Dr. Gardner termed him a loyal "ancestor worshiper" who maintains a "shrine" of family treasures his home at 75 Main Street. A brief question period followed the talk.







## Influence Of Quakerism On Nantucket Discussed

Burnham N. Dell, former professor and dean at Princeton University told members and guests of the Nantucket Historical Society of the influence once exerted by Island Quakers, in the fourth of a series of eight lectures sponsored by the Association Tuesdays at 3 p. m. in the Friends Meeting House.

Mr. Dell, an ordained minister and student of history, emphasized the missionary zeal evidenced during the early Quaker growth on Nantucket. In his talk he touched on the Quaker stand against slavery mentioning the anti-slavery pamphlet written by Elihu Coleman in 1733; the early Quaker schools, and the pacifist attitude which today makes possible the refusal to bear arms by conscientious objectors, he said.

The speaker also presented some of the reasons for the decline of Quakerism. Prominent among the causes, he said, was the attraction of other religious bodies particularly the Methodists, Congregationalists, and the Unitarians who appealed to those who missed the emotional warmth and fervor of evangelical methodism, and the cultural appeal of a trained ministry.

New currents of thought were sweeping over the Island and there was an expansion of the reach of the human mind, the speaker said.

Quakerism, Mr. Dell told his audience, was a product of the Protestant reformation and the extreme view towards liberty of the human conscience. Along with other religions, it was a reaction against orthodox theology: symbols, sacraments and church government, he said.

Early Quaker visits to Nantucket, he said, were made by Jane Stokes in 1664; Thomas Turner in 1698; Thomas Story in 1700; and John Richardson in 1702. By 1684, there was no longer martyrdom in store for the Massachusetts Quaker but the persecution continued.

On the Island, Mr. Dell said, the Quakers were free from rivalry and persecution. They flourished and left their mark in creating an honest, sober and financially responsible society.

The decline he described as sudden and catastrophic. In 50 years, he said, a period from 1795 to 1845, the Quaker society fell from 1700 to 300. This decline came about during an increase in population and growing material prosperity.

Internal dissensions resulting from the literature of the day as expressed by Irving, Cooper, Bryant, Hawthorne, Thoreau and Emerson added to the quick dissolution of the Quaker Society, the speaker declared.

He said the Hicksite struggle in 1830 divided the Quaker society in Philadelphia and New York, but in New England affected only the Nantucket Quakers. Mr. Dell said the struggle arose out of a doctrinal division caused by Elias Hicks who threw doubt on the inspiration of the Bible.

Survival of the Quaker ideal, he said, rested with two women, Narcissa B. Coffin, who once went on a successful missionary tour through the Scandinavian peninsula, and Lucretia Coffin Mott, valuable speaker for women's rights and on the evils of slavery.

Aug. 6, 1954

## Prosperity Enemy of Religion, Says Burnham N. Dell.

One of the great enemies of religion is economic prosperity, Burnham N. Dell, retired minister and former dean at Princeton University, told his audience in a lecture about Nantucket Quakerism at the Friends Meeting House, Tuesday afternoon. The Society of Friends, organized on the island as early as 1708, was unable to survive the social changes brought about by the flourishing whaling industry of the nineteenth century.

On Nantucket, Mr. Dell said, Quakerism suffered few of the problems of becoming accepted on Nantucket which had been a hindrance under the "Wilderness Zion" established by the Puritans on Massachusetts Bay. During the period of greatest Puritan intolerance the island was under the jurisdiction of New York. Thomas Chalkley, Thomas Story, and John Richardson, Quaker leaders visiting here between 1664 and 1702, found no organized church to offer competition. With the conversion of Mary Coffin Starbuck the establishment of the sect was assured.

The essence of the Quaker faith was the belief that each individual was endowed with an "Inner Light" which identified him with his God and which guided him in interpreting the Scriptures, said Mr. Dell. This brought about a reaction against the formal church government, symbols, and sacraments of orthodox theology. The Society of Friends stressed honesty, sobriety, financial responsibility, opposition to slavery, a zeal for peace and opposition to war, violence, and disorder, interest in education, and charity toward the unfortunate.

Mr. Dell traced the increasing vitality of the sect on Nantucket from its first meeting at "Parliament House", home of the "Great Mary". Other buildings which once served as meeting houses are the Dreamland Theatre, moved to its present site from Main Street, the dining room of the Roberts House, and the Friends Meeting House on Fair street which is being preserved by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mr. Dell told his audience that the decline of Quakerism here was sudden and catastrophic. In the period of increasing population and growing material prosperity during the first half of the nineteenth century, the society fell from 1700 to 300 members. Among the causes were prosperity inconsistent with the simplicity of the sect, immigration attraction of other religious bodies, enforcement of discipline, new currents of thought in philosophy, science, theology, art, literature, and music, and the internal dissention over doctrine which split the Nantucket meeting into Hicksites and Gurneyites. In 1894 when the Fair Street building was purchased by the Association, the meeting numbered only twenty-three.

Since then, Mr. Dell said, the Quaker idea has survived in anti-slavery doctrine, woman's rights, and humanitarianism. Today Quakerism on Nantucket continues only in the summer meetings held by the Society at Fair Street.

Moderator was George W. Jones, Secretary of the Association, who introduced the speaker and presided over a brief discussion period following the lecture.



## Historic Nantucket Pump Preserved

Special to The Standard-Times

NANTUCKET, Jan. 9 — An old hand pump originally installed in the kitchen of the home of William Mitchell, father of the famous astronomer, Maria Mitchell, now in a kitchen that is the private office of President Frank E. Lewis of the Pacific National Bank, has been presented to the Nantucket Historical Association as an historic relic.

The pump, which can still be operated, was first installed by Mr. Mitchell in 1837 to draw water from a well beneath what is now the bank building at the head of Main Street. It had remained in its original position above the old sink until 1922 when the kitchen was eliminated to provide the present office for Mr. Lewis.

When the renovations were made, the pump was carried to a third floor storage room, where it had remained undisturbed and completely forgotten until last week when the storage area was cleared.

### Value Recognized

There was nothing about the appearance of the pump to indicate its value and it was marked

for disposal until its finding was mentioned to Mr. Lewis who recognized its historic value.

Mr. Lewis directed the pump be kept, contacted President George W. Jones of the Nantucket Historical Association and asked if it would be of value as a historic piece. President Jones assured Mr. Lewis his association would be happy to receive it.

Also found with the pump were the slanted tops of the old-fashioned stand-up bookkeeper desks, made of ebony with racks on top for holding the account books and drawers for supplies. The legs of the desks had long since been disposed of by bank officials.

The pump will be displayed at the Historical Museum at Fair Street. The larger of the two desk tops will be installed, after suitable legs are made, in the gallery of that museum. It will be shown as an exhibit but used also as a stand-up reference desk much needed by researchers using the old newspaper files.

### Desk to Be Placed

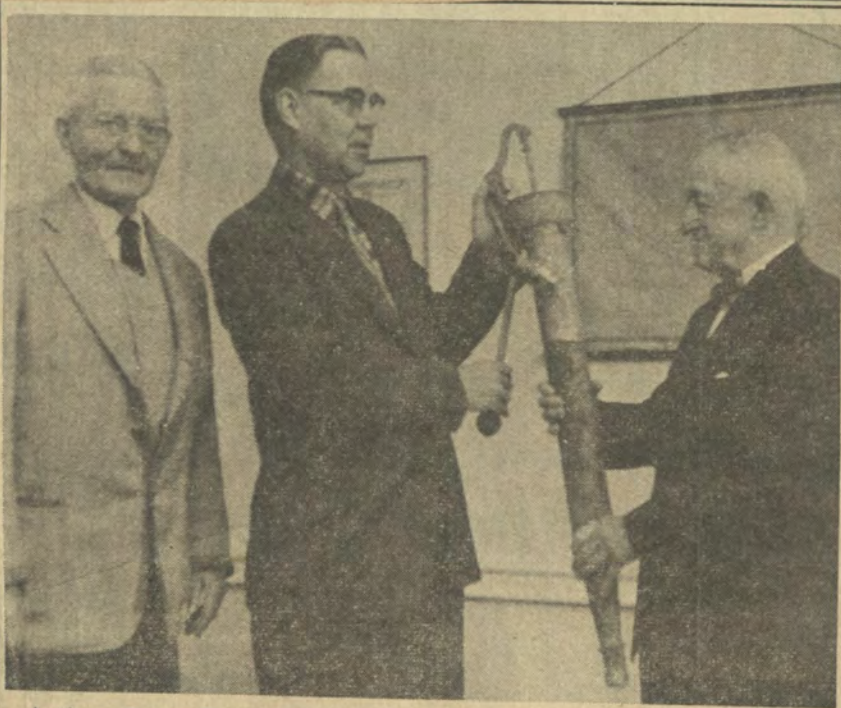
Another desk top, smaller in size, will be placed, when suitable legs are made, in the Whaling

Merchant's Counting Room at the Whaling Museum. This is an item of furniture needed to round out the furniture and equipment of that room.

The Historical Association points out that but for the thoughtful recognition on the part of President Frank E. Lewis of the historic interest and value of these articles they might easily in the cleanup, have found their way to the town dump as too often happens.

The officers of the association noted they welcome news about articles to be discarded and wish to be given an opportunity to inspect them to ascertain their possible historic value and the desirability of preserving them as exhibits in the various buildings of the association.

Jan. 9, 1960



Antique Pump Presented to Historical Association — Dr. Frank E. Lewis, (right) presented an old hand pump of the vintage of 1837 to the Nantucket Historical Association. George W. Jones (center), president of the Historical Association, accepted the pump which will be preserved by the association with other relics found stored in the upstairs section of the bank. The pump was formerly used in the kitchen of the apartment occupied by William Mitchell, a former president of the bank and father of Maria Mitchell, noted woman astronomer. Standing on the left as an interested party is W. Ripley Nelson, president of the Nantucket Civic League and a prominent member of the Historical Association. The pump will be at the Fair Street Museum.

Jan. 15, 1960

## Mementos of William Mitchell Given to Historical Association

In 1837, William Mitchell, father of the famous astronomer Maria Mitchell, became cashier of the Pacific Bank. On his appointment as cashier the family moved to the apartment on the second floor of the bank building. The kitchen for the apartment was located, however, on the first floor of the building in the space now transformed into the President's office and occupied by President Frank E. Lewis.

In the kitchen was an old-fashioned iron hand pump with which the family drew all its water from a well beneath the building. In 1922, the kitchen and the pump were still undisturbed, according to President Lewis who became associated with the bank at that time. Shortly thereafter the kitchen was removed and the pump stored away to be almost forgotten as so often happens with apparently outmoded, useless articles but which in years to come are recognized as historical relics of the past.

In cleaning up recently what is now one of the second floor store rooms of the bank but formerly part of the cashier's living quarters, the old pump was found. The slanted tops of the old fashioned stand-up bookkeeper desks also were found. Made of ebony, with racks on top for holding books and drawers for supplies, although minus the tapered legs, they are well preserved relics of the past.

The Nantucket Historical Association has pleasure in accepting these articles as gifts from President Lewis acting in behalf of the Pacific National Bank.

The pump will be displayed at the Historical Museum at Fair Street. The larger of the two desk tops will be installed, after suitable legs are made, in the gallery of that Museum. It will be shown as an exhibit but used also as a stand-up reference desk much needed by researchers using the old newspaper files.

Jan. 8, 1960



## E. A. Stackpole Addresses Association

Nantucket was described as a one-time "kingdom in the sea" by Edouard A. Stackpole, author, historian and present curator of the Mystic Museum in Mystic, Conn., when he spoke before members and guests of the Historical Association this week at the Friends Meeting House.

The talk was the fifth in a series of eight lectures planned this season by the Association.

"We were told by our teachers," Mr. Stackpole said, "that we were the inheritors of Nantucket. We lived with history; wherever we walked, we could reach out and touch it."

The former president of the Historical Association said that the inhabitants 100 years ago lived in a very happy time. He declared that it was one of the brightest pages in American history.

"I wish," he said, "that I could have lived then."

The speaker also traced the early origins of the Island beginning with Thomas Macy and Tristram Coffin who came here, he said, "with their eyes wide open."

"The early inhabitants were looking for freedom. Their decision to come to Nantucket took courage and determination," he said.

According to Mr. Stackpole one of the misconceptions still remaining concerning that period is that the Indians taught the white man the skills of whaling.

He said that originally, the white settlers had intended to live on the Island by tilling the soil and raising sheep.

"But they discovered that the sea had a richer harvest," he said. Whaling was a known industry since it was being carried on in England, but the Indians did teach them how to chase the whales in shallow water."

In describing the growth of Nantucket, Mr. Stackpole said that the Island's second period came at a time when the inhabitants of Sherburne began looking for a harbor big enough to provide for its growing fleet. When the Nantucket site was decided upon, the residents began moving their houses from the old Sherburne area.

The whaling industry, he said, continued to gain. Nantucket merchants were selling oil to Boston and New York and finally London. At one time the Island was exporting the largest quantities of whale oil anywhere in the world.

Three factors, the Quaker religious rule, Nantucket's geographical position and the whaling industry were listed by the historian as the reasons for his terming the Island a "kingdom in the sea."

The speaker also traced new paths struck by Nantucketers when, after the difficulties that arose during the Revolutionary War, some of the settlers left for Nova Scotia, the Hudson, and even to Dunkirk where William Roach established a whaling port which opened the European continent to American whalers.

## Edouard Stackpole Spoke To Full House.

Edouard A. Stackpole, author, curator of the Marine Museum at Old Mystic Seaport, Conn., and a former president of the Nantucket Historical Association, lectured on the subject "Rambling through Old Nantucket" at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday afternoon. Mr. Stackpole told his audience of his hopes that still greater efforts will be made to preserve and restore the evidences of Nantucket's rich history.

Reminiscing about his boyhood, Mr. Stackpole said that living on the island was "living with history." An appreciation of tradition was inbred in Nantucket youth. It was encouraged in the schools by teachers whose generation overlapped that of the "whaling masters," men who created for Nantucket a kingdom in the sea.

The three most influential factors in Nantucket history are its geographical location, the teachings of the Society of Friends, and the whaling industry, said Mr. Stackpole. Geographical location attracted the first settlers, seeking religious and political freedom from the Puritan oligarchy of Massachusetts Bay in 1659, and soon provided a livelihood which carried Nantucketers around the world. In time of war isolation brought hardships which resulted in migrations to Nova Scotia and then Milford-Haven, Wales, to Hudson, New York, and to Dunkirk, France. Quakerism was strongest here during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but its influence decreased in the face of the increased prosperity brought by whaling. The history of the whaling industry became the history of the island.

Whaling on Nantucket was carried on from shore until 1712 when Christopher Hussey killed a sperm whale and found its oil to be superior quality. The improved light obtainable from a spermaceti candle was hailed with an enthusiasm equalling that for electricity in a later age. Pursuit of the sperm whale carried Nantucketers to all parts of the globe. Nantucket was the first American port to send a ship "round the Horn"—the ship *Beaver*, Capt. Paul Worth. First American whaler around the Cape of Good Hope was commanded by Capt. Uriah Swain of Nantucket. Many of the records of whaling are still to be seen in the logbooks which have been preserved. Through the efforts of pioneering merchants such as William Rotch, Nantucket grew to have international significance in the whaling industry.

The influence of whaling can be seen today in local architecture, said Mr. Stackpole. "Walks" built on roofs served as observation platforms for identifying incoming vessels and for studying weather conditions. Many homes still exhibit details of ship construction. The evolution from the one-and-a-half lean-to style to the full two-story house and structures influenced by the Greek revival period mirror an ascending wealth. The harmony of attractive gardens and neat sidewalks with architectural simplicity merits the expression "95% perfect." Mr. Stackpole stressed the importance of continuing this pattern in future building. He also spoke of

his hope that Nantucket will some day be able to restore along a portion of its waterfront those industries which served as accessories to whaling—the cooper shop, the candle factory, and the rope walk.

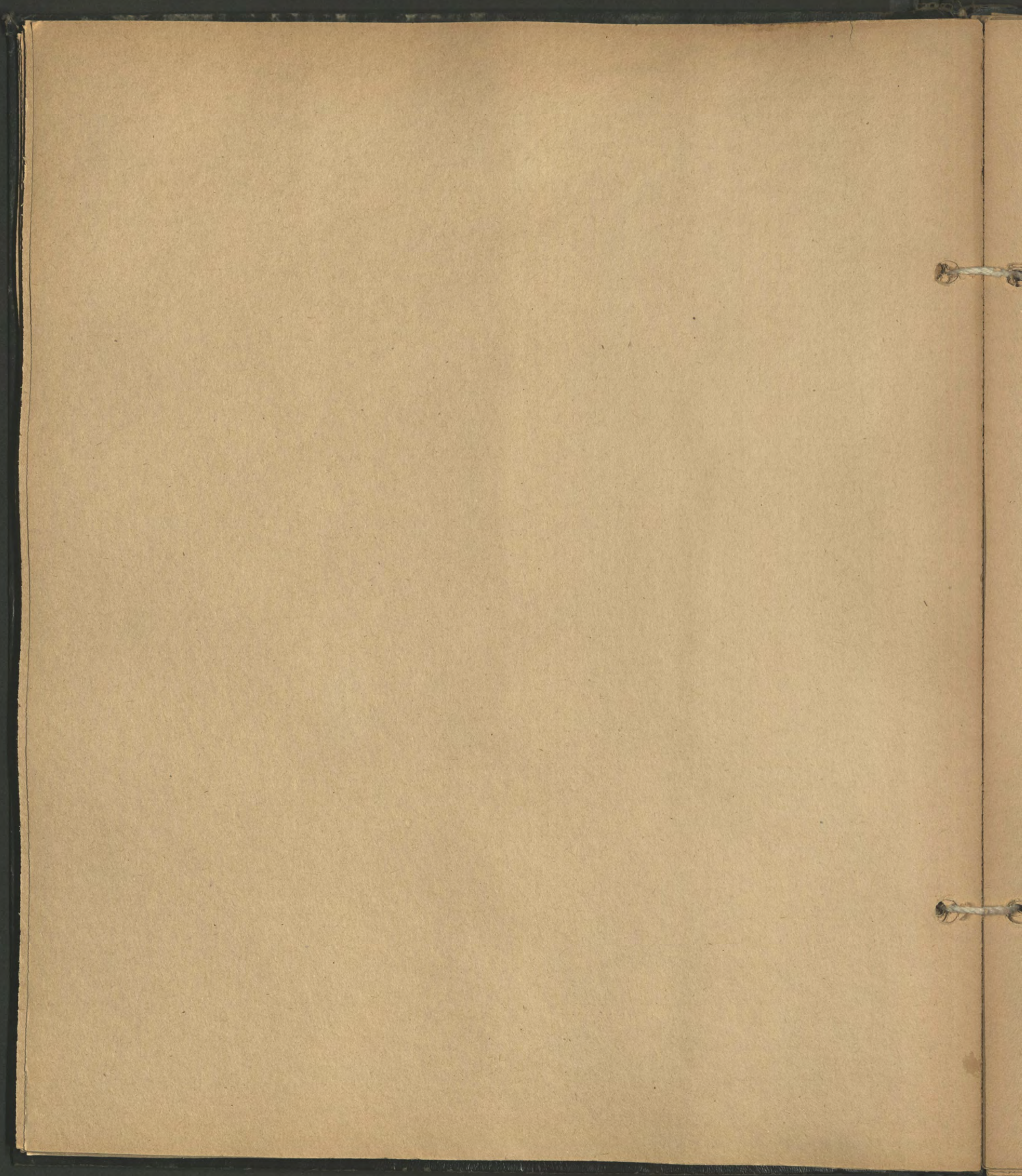
Moderator for the afternoon was Howard U. Chase, a vice-president of the Association.

Aug. 14, 1954

Stackpole 5

Aug. 13, 1954







### A Dream of Empire Described At Historical Lecture.

The "Nantucket Insurrection", a class war in miniature, brought ruin to Tristram Coffin's dream of empire, Rev. Clinton T. Macy of Salem, Mass., a former councillor of the Nantucket Historical Association, told his audience at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday afternoon.

Reverend Macy, who can claim descent from Tristram Coffin through sixteen lines, traced the development of Coffin's dream in the problems of the times. A member of the landed gentry and a staunch supporter of the Anglican Church and of the Crown, he sought refuge in Massachusetts when Cromwell and the Puritan Parliament gained control of the British government. Despite substantial land holdings at Haverhill, obtained after his arrival at Salisbury in 1642, Tristram Coffin lacked the power to vote in town affairs because he failed to become a member of the Congregational Church. Suffrage in the Puritan theocracy was based upon church membership. He then moved to Newbury and, after his wife, Dionis, had tangled with the courts over the quality of the beer she made to serve at their inn, returned to Salisbury where Puritan domination continued to gall him. By 1659 Coffin had made friends with a number of men who shared his dissatisfaction.

Nantucket appeared to be the ideal spot for Tristram Coffin to realize his ambitions, said Reverend Macy. The island was then owned by the Dutch and offered a geographical location isolated from Puritan interference. Arriving in 1660, Tristram spent the next few years acquiring title to lands which eventually gave the Coffin clan major control of the little harbor, now Capaum Pond, as well as other valuable pieces of property, including the island of Tucker-nuck.

Reverend Macy told of Tristram's struggle to consolidate his position by obtaining political control. Coffin and his nine associates had granted to ten additional men full shares in the island, and had attracted fourteen tradesmen by offering half shares. Through the efforts of Tristram Coffin, the town of Sherburne was created, and he was appointed its first magistrate. Suffrage in town affairs was limited to property owners. Each half-share man was entitled to a single vote, while full-share holders had two. This undemocratic arrangement was unchallenged until the arrival of John Gardner, cod fisherman, in 1672. The confusion which resulted from the revolt of the half-share men, known as the Nantucket Insurrection, was increased by the see-sawing struggle of the Dutch to retain control of their holdings. When the smoke finally cleared away, the English government at New York reversed all appointments and decisions imposed by the Coffin faction and ordered Tristram to make public apology for his actions. John Gardner became chief magistrate, and Tristram Coffin, his relatives and friends, continued to register a dissenting vote on most questions.

At the height of his power Tristram Coffin and his family owned the most desirable property on Nantucket. Son Peter's monopoly on trade with the mainland was the key to the island's economy. The political power necessary to safeguard his feudal rights was within Tristram's grasp. That he was unable to realize his ambitions was due mainly to existing currents of thought regarding democracy, equality, and the rights of man, said Reverend Macy.

The real monument to Tristram Coffin's dream of empire rests in his descendants, most numerous and leaders in every profession, said Reverend Macy. For the harbor is now a pond; the town has moved east, and only a small granite marker records the site of Tristram's home-stand.

Dr. William E. Gardner introduced Reverend Macy, a fellow-clergyman and a cousin through the Coffin and Macy lines.

Aug. 21, 1954

### Island Settler Subject Of Historical Talk

One of the Nantucket founders, Tristram Coffin, a member of the "landed gentry" probably left England because of the insecurity felt by aristocrats during the struggle for power between Charles I and the Puritan parliament, the Rev. Clinton T. Macy told members and guests of the Nantucket Historical Association at an informal lecture Wednesday in the Friends Meeting House.

The talk was the sixth in a series of eight sponsored this year by the Association in celebration of its 60th anniversary.

The Rev. Macy said that Tristram's branch of the family owned large estates in England and was numbered among the aristocrats. But, he added, as the fight for supremacy between the Puritan faction and the supporters of Charles I grew in intensity, their position became more precarious.

Finally, Tristram Coffin sailed with his family to Salisbury where great tracts of land were being offered with apportionment based on amount of personal property, he said.

"In the same year, he moved to an area that is now known as Haverhill," Mr. Macy said, "But he did not remain there long."

Because of religious reasons, Coffin decided to leave. During that time, the right to vote depended upon individual submission to the dominant religious body, he said.

Tristram Coffin went into business in 1645, operating an inn with help of his wife and also a ferry service across the Haverhill River. He shifted again a little later according to Mr. Macy, returning to Salisbury where he was again in difficulties with the local authorities.

It was here that he fell in with the men who were soon to participate in the Nantucket venture, Mr. Macy said. Along with men like Thomas Macy, who was also resisting local authority, and Peter Folger who held what was considered a heretical view of baptism, and others who did not agree with governing religious groups or held "extreme views" Coffin left for Nantucket, Mr. Macy said.

"Here, for 30 pounds sterling and two beaver hats, the Island was purchased from Thomas Mayhew. Free from the tyrannical control of the Puritans, Tristram Coffin at last had a voice in government affairs."

According to Mr. Macy, Coffin settled in the Dionis area where he immediately secured for himself the best possible land. Further manipulations gave him virtual control of the harbor.

Later in a struggle with the half share men, inhabitants of the Island who followed the first settlers and so had a smaller vote in government, Coffin's attempt to introduce a new feudal system was frustrated with the rise in power of John Gardner, who later carried the favor of Dutch authorities in New York and was named military magistrate, Mr. Macy said.

However, by 1676, Mr. Macy added, Tristram Coffin was back in power with the overthrow of the Dutch by the English. He then began to gain control of land, politics and trade. His harsh measures soon brought censure from the English authorities.

"Tristram died in 1681," Mr. Macy said, "but he had begun the empire of descendants that would in time contribute leaders to every field of American endeavor."

Aug. 20, 1954







## Folk Art Of The American Whaleman Is Subject Of Talk To Historical Association

"The art of scrimshaw is considered the only important indigenous folk art, except that of the Indians, which has ever developed in America," Miss Helen L. Winslow, Whaling Museum librarian and history teachers told members and guests of the Nantucket Historical Association this week at an informal lecture held at Friends Meeting House.

Her talk, entitled The Folk Art of the American Whaleman, was the seventh in a series of eight lectures sponsored this year by the Association in celebrating its 60th anniversary.

Miss Winslow told her audience that the subject of scrimshaw has been obscured by the more colorful aspects of whaling and given scant notice by historians. However, in recent years, she said, an increase in collecting antiques has focussed attention on whale ivory sculpture achieved with the crude, scanty tools available to the sailor of the whaling era.

Some of the theories describing the origin of the term "scrimshaw" were discussed by the speaker. One, she said, was advanced on the basis of skimshander and skrimshander which offered a possible analogy between these forms and the words "skimp" and "scrimpt" meaning "scant" or in verb form, "to economize."

"However, considering the word scrimshant, an early form, others believe that scrimshaw comes from an old word scrimshander or scrimshanker, an idle, worthless fellow," she said.

Gradually, she said, the term might have come to mean the artistic results of a sailor's idle hours at sea. "This would seem to be the most satisfactory derivation, but it is no more conclusive."

Because Nantucketers were indoctrinated with the belief that idleness was a "most heinous sin," wood carving was almost second nature, according to the Whaling Museum librarian.

She said that St. John Crevecoeur, a Frenchman who visited the Island during the late 1800's, wrote: I must confess that I have never seen more ingenuity in the use of the knife; thus the many idle moments of their lives become usefully employed.

In the many hours of leisure which their long cruises afford them, they cut and carve a variety of boxes and pretty toys adapted to different uses which they bring home as testimonies of remembrance to their wives or sweet-

hearts.

"They have showed me a variety of little bowls and other implements executed cooper-wise, with the greatest neatness and elegance. Almost every man in this Island has always two knives in his pocket, one much larger than the other; and although they hold everything that is called fashion in the utmost contempt, yet they are difficult to please and as extravagant in the choice and price of their knives as any young buck in Boston would be about his hat, buckles, or coat."

Miss Winslow said that despite the lack of publicity, the art of scrimshaw played a major role in the everyday life of the whaleman. Men swapped tobacco, the universal currency aboard whalers, washed clothes and did other menial tasks in order to gain coveted pieces of ivory.

New Bedford whaleship owners, she said, once debated whether the interest of the whaleman in his scrimshaw was not detrimental to the success of voyages.

"Men had even been known to sight whales and then fail to report them rather than interrupt some particularly interesting stage of their artistry."

On some vessels scrimshaw was limited to the forecabin and was subject to widespread confiscation if brought on deck, she said.

Herman Melville, author of Moby Dick, also had something to say about scrimshaw, according to Miss Winslow. He wrote: "Some of them have little boxes of denistical-looking implements especially intended for the scrimshandering business, but in general they toil with their jackknives alone."

Miss Winslow said that sometimes sail knives were substituted along with improvised files, converted chisels, and gimlets fashioned from nails. Green whalebone, she explained, was soft enough to be planed or otherwise worked, but the harder whale tooth required sharp cutting tools.

The Wisconsin history teacher said the sailor's needle was the most versatile element in the paraphernalia of scrimshaw.

"From it were contrived a variety of files, fine saws, and the piercing and boring instruments used in executing the openwork patterns found in rings, bracelets, brooches and needlesheaths," she said.

Miss Winslow said there is little in scrimshaw that is reminiscent of other arts, and that despite attempts of writers to seek the origin of it in the primitive art of the Eskimo or the South-Sea Islander, it has been established that the sources of inspiration were to be found in the environment of the whaleman.

"Certainly," she said, "a trophy of the whale hunt, the symbol of the whaleman's success—a huge tooth taken from the gigantic sea

mammal whose capture held his life in constant danger—was a natural gift to a distant friend or loved one."

"The gift was made even more meaningful with its carefully etched pictures of the ship under full sail, incidents of the chase and whale captures. There are no choicer bits of Americana to be collected than these records of heroic deeds."

"As Clifford Ashley has so aptly expressed it: 'If part of his work is clumsy and impractical, and misses its intent, nevertheless the beauty of the material imparts to it some degree of charm, so that the least successful of it is not to be passed over lightly, and the best of it ranks among the fine arts.'"

Aug. 27, 1954

### Whaling Era Therapy Described At Historical Lecture

"Scrimshanting was the seafaring occupational therapy of the Whaling Era," Miss Helen L. Winslow, librarian at the Whaling Museum, told an audience at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday afternoon. The carvings of whalebone and whale ivory made by whalemen represent the only indigenous American folk art except that of the Indians.

Miss Winslow said that the derivation of "scrimshaw" is obscure, coming perhaps from "skrimshanker" or "skrimshander," an idle, worthless fellow, and now referring to the specialized leisure-time activity which occupied the time and talents of all aboard ship. Owners occasionally complained that scrimshanting interfered with the business of whaling, and masters sometimes restricted it to the forecabin, or crew's quarters.

Earliest reference to scrimshaw is in the log, in poetry, of the Ship *Nauphin*, kept by the third mate Charles Murphey in 1823, Miss Winslow said. Yet Nantucketers were known as expert woodcarvers in the eighteenth century, and whalemen from this port must have discovered early the possibilities of whale ivory.

Even the whaleman's tools may be considered scrimshaw, said Miss Winslow, for they were hand-made files, saws, and gimlets, fashioned from sailor's needles with ivory and bone parts. Before these could be used however, the teeth must first be softened in brine or hot water, ground, filed, and sandpapered smooth. Designs were pricked on, and colored with India ink, paint, tar, or soot from the tryworks. The more talented craftsmen experimented with inlays of shell, mother-of-pearl, or precious metals.

"The prerequisites of scrimshaw were time, patience, and extreme caution."

Miss Winslow said that whaleman's dictionary of ornament was found in his environment—knots in the rigging, the stars, birds, whales, fish, his ship, the wheel, the anchor. Women he copied from Godey's Book. His favorite subjects were scenes of the chase and capture of whales.

"There are no choicer bits of Americana to be collected than these records of heroic deeds."

The Nantucket Whaling Museum, said Miss Winslow, has a representative collection of scrimshaw which includes engraved teeth, busks, jaggings wheels, clothes pins, dippers, cribbage boards, blocks, and fids. Whalemen made articles for the home, for the ship, for recreation, and for decoration. Strangely enough, they made very few ship models and candlesticks. Other collections of scrimshaw can be seen at New Bedford, Salem, Mystic, Conn., Sag Harbor, L. I., and Newport News, Va. Many valuable items are owned privately.

"The whaleman gave free expression to whatever beauty he felt within. The student of the whaling industry would wonder to find so much feeling actually existed. If part of his work is clumsy, the beauty of the material imparts some degree of charm, so that the least successful of it is not to be passed over lightly, and the best of it ranks among the Fine Arts."

Mr. W. Ripley Nelson, an officer of the Nantucket Historical Association, was chairman for the afternoon. Several choice items of scrimshaw from the Whaling Museum collection were on display, as well as two handsomely inlaid doll bureaus, made by John B. Coffin, a great-grandfather of Mrs. Lewis Edgarton.

Aug. 28, 1954



**Scrimshaw, a Whaleman's Art,  
Features Historical Lecture.**

The art of "Scrimshaw" has been considered the only important indigenous folk art, except that of the Indians, which has ever developed in America. At the same time it has become one of the mysteries in the history of handicrafts. These are the words of Miss Helen L. Winslow, a native born Nantucketer, who through painstaking research has become very much of an authority on the subject as evidenced by an article written by her and published recently.

The Nantucket Historical Association has pleasure in announcing that Miss Winslow will be the speaker at the seventh informal lecture in the series being conducted by the Historical Association this summer in celebration of its sixtieth anniversary. "The Folk Art of the American Whaleman" is the title of the lecture, which will provide a real opportunity to members of the Association and the interested public to learn first hand some of the results of Miss Winslow's research on this fascinating subject. Examples of scrimshaw from the Association's collection will be shown and the oft repeated saying that a sailor's handiwork reflected his thoughts in idle hours will be proven to those who take advantage of this opportunity to hear this lecture.

Miss Winslow, born in Nantucket, a graduate of State Teachers College, Bridgewater, Mass., has done graduate work in American History at the University of Wisconsin over a period of years during which time she has taught at the Junior and Senior High schools of Nantucket and for the past two years, history, at Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin. During the past two summers she has served as Librarian at the Whaling Museum in Nantucket giving her ample opportunity to extend her research work in American History and interesting side lines such as the subject of her lecture.

The lecture will be held Tuesday, August 24th at 3 p.m. at the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street. The Council extends a cordial invitation to members and the public to attend. Admission to the lecture is free.



### "Carol" Didn't Dampen Interest In Mrs. Adams' Lecture.

Not even the hurricane with its accompanying downpour was sufficient to dampen the interest of the public in Mrs. Nancy S. Adams' lecture on "A Nantucket Whaleman and His Family." When the hour arrived the Friends Meeting House was well filled with a most attentive audience.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner, a vice-president of the Nantucket Historical Association, presided. She spoke of the lecture as the last and valedictory in the series of lectures in celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Society, and of Mrs. Adams as a most worthy valedictorian, prepared to take her audience to the far corners of the world as a member of Nantucket's most notable whaling family.

Mrs. Adams' story commenced with her grandfather, Capt. Charles Grant, who is credited with being the greatest of all whaling masters. When a mere lad of eleven years he began his whaling career, shipping as cabin boy in the ship "John Jay" of Nantucket. It was not a bright beginning to his career, for the master in a quarrel stabbed and killed the second mate and was sent home in irons.

After a four year voyage in the ship "Maria," Charles Grant shipped as boatsteerer in the "Mount Vernon" which made a remarkable voyage, taking 3,071 barrels of oil in thirty-four months.

Steadily advancing in his profession, when he was thirty years of age he sailed his first voyage as master on the ship "Walter Scott." After this voyage Capt. Grant married Nancy Wyer of Nantucket, who accompanied him on most of his subsequent voyages. These voyages were all most successful and his fame as a sperm whaleman spread far and wide.

Sailing on a series of far flung cruises the young bride provided her children with most unusual birthplaces in far away lands.

The oldest son of Charles and Nancy Grant was the first white child born on Pitcairn Island where Peggy Christian, one of the descendants of the Bounty Mutineers, cared for the mother and baby.

Mrs. Nancy Adams' father, George A. Grant, was born in the town of Apia on the island of Upolu, one of the Samoan group, and was carried on board his father's ship, the "Mohawk" wrapped in banana leaves.

A daughter, Ella, the widow of George Pierce of New Bedford, was born at Bay of Islands, New Zealand, and is now living at the age of 99.

The baby who was born in Apia was known to some in the audience as George A. Grant, Curator of the Nantucket Whaling Museum. He was a whaleman, born and bred. At the age of six months he had been half way around the world and two years later he had circumnavigated the globe, and sailed through five of its seven seas. He, like his father, had a long and adventurous life and many enjoyed the salty flavor of the tales told by him at the Whaling Museum.

Mrs. George Grant spent in all thirty-two years at sea on board a whaleship with her husband, and many and exciting were her experiences, and most entertainingly were they related by her granddaughter.

It is rumored that in the near future Mrs. Adams plans to add to the present collection of whaling stories a book containing the deeds of her famous whaling forbears. It will undoubtedly meet with success, and reflect credit both on Mrs. Adams and on the Nantucket Historical Association of which she is the talented president.

### Life of Charles Grant, Nantucket Whaling Skipper, Described To Historical Group

Mrs. Nancy Adams, president of the Nantucket Historical Association told an audience at the Friends Meeting House Tuesday some of the life story of her grandfather, Charles Grant, a former Nantucket whaling skipper.

Her talk was the eighth and final lecture sponsored by the Historical Association which this year is celebrating its 60th anniversary. The speaker was introduced by Miss Grace Brown Gardner.

Beginning with the arrival in Nantucket of her great grandfather James Grant, Mrs. Adams traced the Grant sea history. Her great grandfather, she said, was born in Scotland and went to sea at the age of 16.

After his ship was wrecked off the coast of Nantucket, he decided to settle here. He married a descendant of Tristram Coffin and became a ship rigger.

Seven children were born to the Grants, Mrs. Adams said, the youngest being Charles who shipped out on a whaler as a cabin boy at an early age.

Mrs. Adams related one of the early adventures of Charles Grant that happened on his first voyage. The captain was an alcoholic, according to the speaker, and at breakfast one morning ordered the second mate to go on deck.

The mate said he would as soon as he had finished his breakfast. The captain became incensed and attacked the mate with a knife. In the struggle the mate was killed.

At a trial held later, the captain was acquitted, Mrs. Adams said.

In subsequent voyages, Charles Grant received rapid promotions, according to Mrs. Adams. He sailed under famous Nantucket sea captains and when the ship on which he took his fourth voyage moved out of Nantucket Harbor, he was second mate and engaged to an Island girl.

At the end of the voyage, the young seafarer returned to find the girl married. The next girl he met, Mrs. Adams said, he married before starting out to sea again.

Charles Grant's reputation as a whaler grew and it wasn't long before he became a captain. Meanwhile his wife, tired of the long and lonely shore vigils, asked to go along on the next voyage. They had been married ten years and Charles had been ten years at sea, the speaker said.

On the next voyage his wife was aboard the ship. She spent her hours sewing and knitting and on one occasion after her husband nailed a \$20 gold piece to the mast with the announcement that it would go to the man who first sighted a whale, she roused the ship with the cry "There blows."

The Historical Association president said that Mrs. Grant gave birth to a son, Charles William on a Pacific Island. Charles, who was on a cruising voyage returned to discover happily that he had an heir, Mrs. Adams said.

There were more children and greater honors for Charles, and Mrs. Adams recounted many of the incidents that filled his life.

"Although he had made a great fortune, he was very generous," Mrs. Adams said, "and saved very little."

### Historical Association President Speaks at Final Lecture.

"A Nantucket Whaleman and His Family" is the intriguing title of the next, and final, lecture, of the series given this summer by the Nantucket Historical Association in celebrating its 60th anniversary. The subject becomes more alluring when one knows that the speaker will be none other than the President of the Historical Association, Mrs. Walton H. Adams, but better known to her host of friends and admirers as "Nancy Adams".

Granddaughter of Captain Charles Grant, who spent 56 years on whale ships and who has been acknowledged Nantucket's most successful whaling captain, and daughter of George Grant, a whaler in his own right who first set up the Historical Association's Whaling Museum exhibits, and was its first custodian, Mrs. Adams has inherited a wealth of factual data which, when presented by her, spiced with many a salty yarn, keeps her hearers fascinated.

James Grant, her great-grandfather, who hailed from Tomintoul, Scotland, was shipwrecked and cast ashore on Nantucket in 1801. Cared for until restored to health but being destitute he was "bound out" to the Appleton Farm then located on what is now Hummock Pond Road. There he met and married Elizabeth Ellis, whose mother was a Coffin and a direct descendant of Tristram Coffin.

Added to this historical family background, is Mrs. Adams' knowledge, in her own right, of Nantucket gained through active work in the Atheneum, Daughters of the American Revolution, Town, and County positions and particularly the Historical Association. For over 30 years she has been active in the latter, serving as Curator, Librarian, Vice-President, and as a member for many years of the Whaling Museum, Historical Museum and Friends Meeting House committees, until today she is President, Chairman of the Council, Custodian of Collections, Chairman of Friends Meeting House, the Historical Museum, the Membership Committee, and a member of the Publicity Committee. In addition, she is a Director of the Bay State Historical League and a Director at Large of the newly formed Council of Cape and Island Historical Societies. So it is little wonder that when asked a question about Nantucket history, whaling or otherwise, she is able to give promptly either the answer or tell where the answer may be found.

For some years Mrs. Adams has been writing the history of her family and, while she is most reticent to disclose the contents or even the theme of the manuscript until it is completed, those who will be fortunate enough to hear her lecture may be sure that they will be privileged to enjoy what might be called a preview of an authentic and fascinating story of a true Nantucket Whaleman's family. The lecture will be held Tuesday afternoon at 3 p.m., August 31st, at the Friends Meeting House, Fair Street.

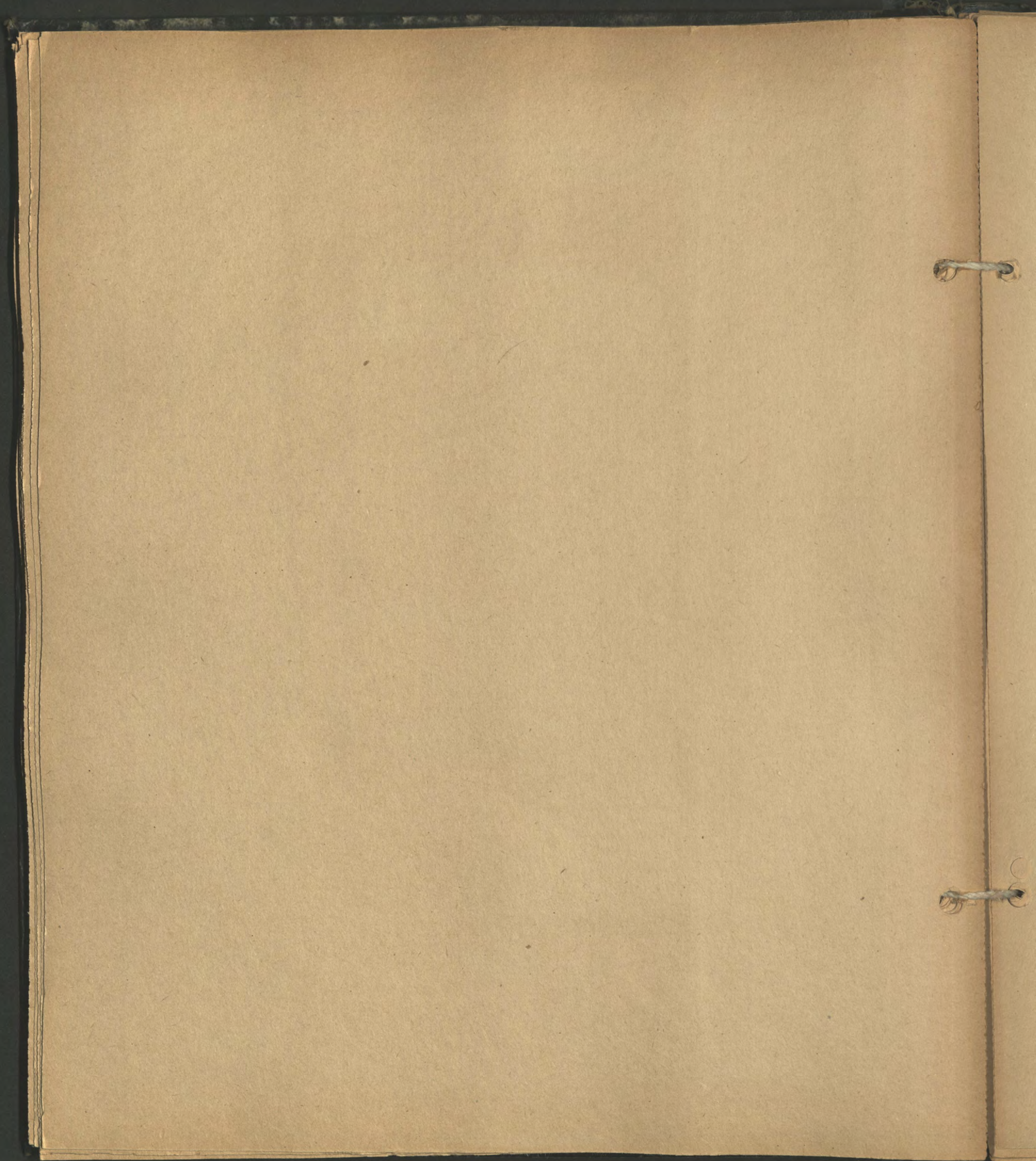
Members and the public are cordially invited to attend. There will be no admission charge.

AUG. 28, 1954

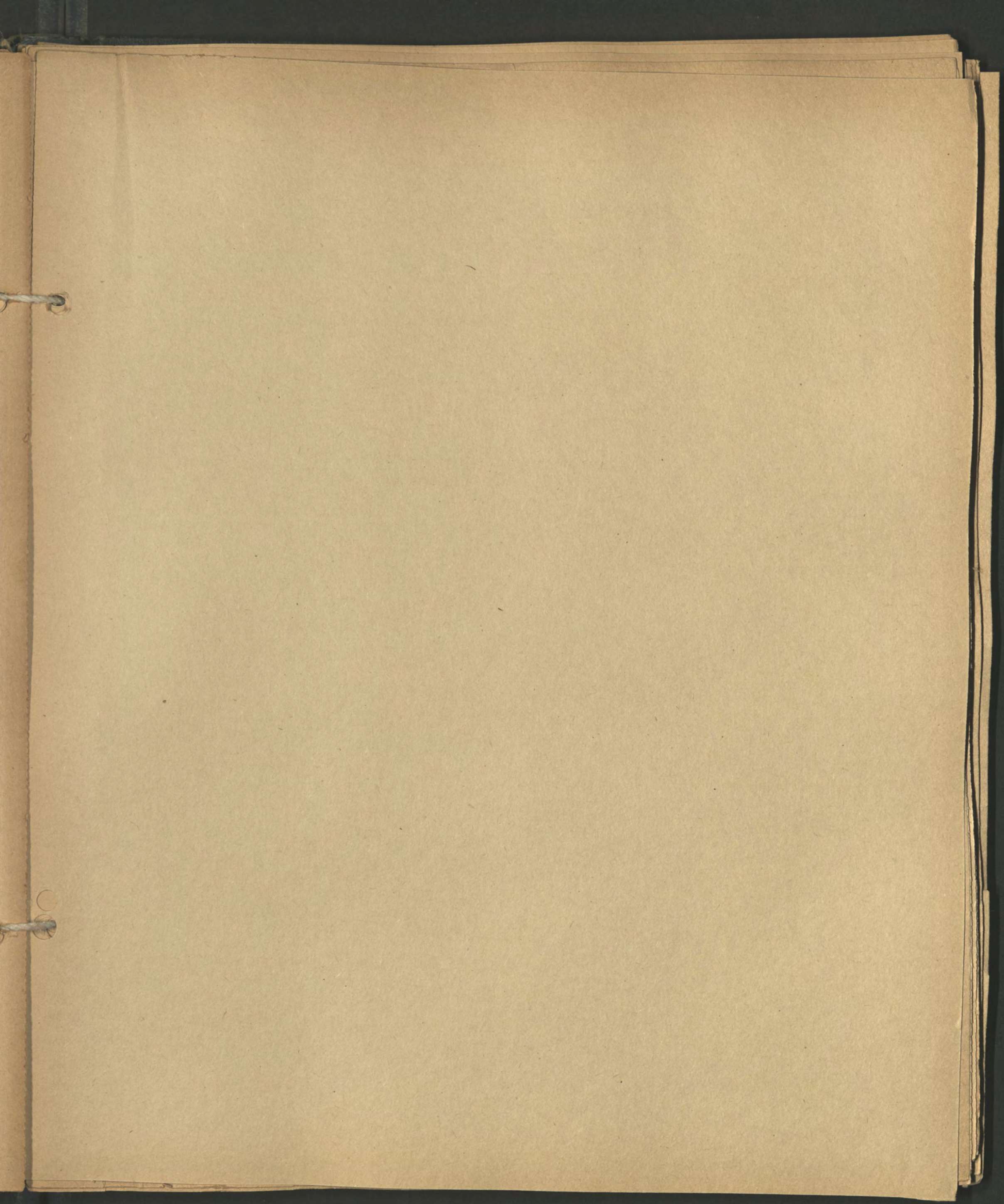
Adams

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1955

# OLD - TIME NANTUCKET

## INFORMAL TALKS

Summer of 1955

- July 5 **Speaker: Dr. William E. Gardner**  
Subject: Nantucket Heroes of the Sea— They Saved Life; They Gave Life.
- July 12 **Speaker: Mr. Burnham N. Dell**  
Subject: Nantucket Plants a Colony in the Old World.
- July 26 **Speaker: Mr. Paul Whitten**  
Subject: Nantucket's Sheep Festivals—"Twas tu I can't, and tu I can".
- August 2 **Speaker: Mrs. Elias J. Lyon**  
Subject: The Romance of Old Nantucket Houses.
- August 9 **Speaker: Mr. Louis S. Davidson**  
Subject: Nantucket and Photography
- August 16 **Speaker: Mr. Edouard A. Stackpole**  
Subject: Adventures with the Nantucket Whalermen.
- August 23 **Speaker: Mrs. J. Clinton Andrews**  
Subject: An Old-Time Nantucket Shooting Journal.
- August 30 **Speaker: Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson**  
Subject: My Childhood Days in 'Sconset.

## Island Shipwrecks, Rich Salvage And Heroism Recalled In Historical Talk

The days of full-rigged sailing ships when Nantucketers and Boston tugs vied for rich salvage and heroism was commonplace were recaptured Tuesday afternoon when Dr. William E. Gardner, Island historian, lectured at Friends Meeting House on "Nantucket Heroes of the Sea." The lecture was the first of a series to be given by the Historical Association during the Summer.

The hour-session featured a tape-recording arranged by Robert W. Stark of an interview between Dr. Gardner and Chester Pease, one of the last men who actually engaged in thrilling sea rescues from the Island shore.

Dr. Gardner told the large audience how his interest in the heroes of the sea first became aroused. In 1886 he had witnessed the rescue attempts of Nantucketers to save the crew of a three-masted schooner which was breaking up off South Shore. Two of the crew were saved in the below-freezing weather and the incident left an indelible impression, Dr. Gardner said.

Dr. Gardner showed a scrapbook, a memorial to Nantucket heroes of the sea, which he is compiling. It began with newspaper accounts, medals and citations awarded Walter Wilson Chase for an arduous rescue of seven seamen from the rigging of their ship on Rose and Crown Shoals. A modern sea hero in the scrapbook is Johnny Walling, a submarine commander in World War II, who was lost when his underseas craft went down with all hands.

The tape recording of conversation between Mr. Pease and Dr. Gardner consisted largely of Mr. Pease's recollections of sea rescues off Nantucket. He told of the rescue of the crew of the Schooner Vulcan on Oct. 23, 1891 after the ship struck shoals just outside the end of the eastern jetties. Mr. Pease said the ship had been loaded with lime and for yards around, the boiling sea was white with the chemical and each man engaged in the rescue was thoroughly "white-washed" before reaching shore. He told of the salvage of a schooner off the South Shore which required some 30 miles of rowing to reach. The boat was deserted by her crew, but being loaded with lumber, stayed afloat and was claimed for salvage by the rescuers.

The old mariner said the Boston Marine Underwriters maintained two boats for wrecking on Nantucket and whoever reached them first went out after a ship in distress. A percentage of the salvage ship went to its rescuers and the rest to owners and insurance.

Boston tugboat skippers plagued the Nantucketers in their salvage operations, but, on at least one occasion, were outsmarted by Island ingenuity, Mr. Pease said. He and other men boarded a coast-wise schooner adrift off Great Point which had lost her anchor. To keep the tugboat captain from realizing the ship's helplessness, the Nantucketers fashioned a wooden anchor and colored it with

tar, then hired the skipper to tow them to Boston. Still helpless, they had their prize towed into Boston, received their salvage money and watched the tugboat skipper dance with impotent rage when he realized he had been taken.

After the tape recording, which ended with the roar of breakers and the cry—Wreck offshore!—Dr. Gardner spoke on some other Nantucket sea heroes. He said that Island lifesavers are reticent persons who would rather talk about money they made or the prizes they salvaged rather than the people they rescued from death. He mentioned George Ed Coffin who leaped from a plunging boat to the rigging of a sinking ship with a lifeline tied around his waist, Reuben Chase who served on John Paul Jones' Bonhomme Richard during its valiant duel with the Serapis and Reuben Coffin who commanded the steamer which brought the Monitor to Norfolk, Va. where it clashed with the Confederate Merrimac ending Southern dreams of breaking the Union blockade.

Dr. Gardner, a retired Episcopal minister, is the author of "Three Bricks and Three Brothers," the story of the fascinating Starbuck family, "The Coffin Saga," and "The Clock That Talks," a story of the Folgers.

July 8, 1955

Gardner



## Wales Town Founded By Nantucketers Is Subject Of Talk

Mr. and Mrs. Burnham Dell of Nantucket found the residents of Milford Haven, Wales, the site of a Nantucket colony planted in the Old World, a friendly and hospitable lot during their visit there last Spring. In an Historical Association talk Tuesday afternoon at the Friends Meeting House, Mr. Dell told a near capacity audience some of the involved history of the founding of the sea village on the Welsh peninsula.

Mr. Dell, former dean of Princeton University, said Island historian Dr. William Gardner had preceded his planned visit to England with lengthy correspondence to various citizens of Milford Haven so that he was deluged with generous offers to come and stay in the little Welsh town. Mr. Dell and his wife drove through the scenic Welsh hills, then down a long peninsula which is only 74 miles from the Irish coast at its nearest point. As they approached the ocean, the land became less hilly and on the north bluff to the left of a narrow estuary was Milford Haven. Mr. Dell said the north shore has deep indentations which remind the residents of the fiords of Norway.

The main part of town, he said, is laid out along three parallel streets with Hamilton Terrace dominating the bluff. Milford Haven is a "made to order" town with no Tudor, Roman or Saxon architectural remnants.

Mr. Dell said his interest in Milford Haven was aroused by the discovery of a diary kept by Abiel Coleman Folger, a transplanted Nantucketer, which she had sent to relatives on the Island. The diary, covering the years from 1806 to 1811 was found by Mrs. Folger's grand-niece, Mrs. George Jones.

Mr. Dell told of a special dinner at the Old Inn in Milford Haven in 1802 which brought together most of the people responsible for the founding of the village. Lord Nelson, England's most famous sailor, was guest of honor and others attending were Nantucketers Samuel Starbuck, Timothy Folger and Benjamin Rotch, Sir William Hamilton and Lady Hamilton, suppliers of capital for the venture, and Sir William's nephew Greville who had originated the idea of building the town.

Lord Nelson spoke at the dinner and said he saw a great future for Milford Haven as a seaport, adding that it was second in potential to only one other harbor in the United Kingdom. However, Mr. Dell said, Benjamin Rotch, was "scandalized" by the behavior of the uninhibited Lady Hamilton and found Lord Nelson "cold and uninteresting."

After his humorous account of the dinner at the Old Inn, later Lord Nelson's Hotel, which brought together the oddly-matched persons responsible for founding Milford Haven, Mr. Dell gave a brief history of the unique village.

When whaling was fading in Nantucket after the Revolution, William Rotch had set out to found a seaport colony in England where there was a great market for sperm oil. Although Prime Minister Pitt wanted the Nantucketers to settle in England and boost that nation's sea power, his assistants' stalling and petty politics caused Rotch to quit in disgust after months of waiting and take his Islanders to Dunkirk, France in 1787. When Greville approached higher-ups in London with the idea of a ready-made sea town in Milford Haven, they wasted little time in contacting a colony of Nantucketers, led by Samuel Starbuck and Timothy Folger, which had settled in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia in 1785. England was determined not to allow the fine

Nantucket seamen to escape their grasp a second time. An agreement was quickly reached and in 1792, 15 families on 13 ships manned by 182 men put out for Milford Haven. Nantucketers were paid for the cost of the homes which they left behind in Dartmouth and were given access to docks, quays and storehouses which had been erected in Milford Haven with Sir William's and Greville money, Mr. Dell said.

Mr. Dell said a ready-made industry was carried to the Welsh town with the Nantucketers. The streets of London were lit by sperm whale oil which the Islanders set out to deliver. Others became storekeepers, bankers, bakers and one, a brewer. Nothing that women have changed very little over the years, Mr. Dell said the women of Milford Haven enjoyed shopping and calling on one another. Auctions were very popular with them, too. Unusually enough, the Quaker colony did not erect a meeting house until 1811.

However, whaling did not prosper long in Milford Haven, according to Mr. Dell. The chief reason was the resurgence of the business in Nantucket. Gradually the Nantucketers drifted away from Milford Haven and Dr. Starbuck who died in 1950 there was believed to be the last descendant of the original Nantucket settlers.

There is still a great deal of similarity between Milford Haven and Nantucket, Mr. Dell said, for the residents of the small Welsh seaport town have that fine hospitality and generosity found here.

## Historical Association Lecture.

"The whalemens of Nantucket reversed the course of history by planting a colony of the New World in the Old", Mr. Burnham N. Dell, retired minister and former professor at Princeton University, told his audience at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday afternoon. His talk was the second in a series about Old-Time Nantucket being sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association.

On August 1, 1802, Mr. Dell said, the first citizens of the town of Milford Haven, Wales, assembled at a famous dinner to honor Lord Nelson, hero of the Battle of the Nile which he had fought four years earlier. Outstanding among the dinner companions was a diverse assortment, indeed, Sir William Hamilton and his Lady, the notorious Emma Hart; nephew Charles Greville; Jean-Louis Barrelier, engineer and town architect; and Samuel Starbuck and Timothy Folger, Nantucket whalemens. Presence of these two sober Quakers who could hardly have approved of the forward actions of Lady Hamilton at a public affair, can be explained by going back a dozen years earlier.

The town of Milford Haven was part of an estate which Sir William Hamilton had inherited from his first wife, Catherine Barlow. His nephew, Charles Greville, who was agent for the estate and anxious to put it on a paying basis, made plans to use the excellent harbor by establishing a whaling port. Although, less than ten years before, William Rotch had tried unsuccessfully to gain a foothold in England, through the influence of Greville a representative of the office of the Secretary of State paid a visit to the settlement of Nantucketers at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Having arranged to receive full payment for their Dartmouth property and the cost of transfer, in 1792 fifteen families led by Samuel Starbuck and Timothy Folger migrated to England.

The Nantucketers of Milford Haven and of Dartmouth, said Mr. Dell, played important roles in the Anglo-American struggle for whaling supremacy. But island ties proved the strongest, and, while the Nantucket fleet recovered from the effects of the War of 1812 and continued to grow through the efforts of the enterprising men who could not be lured to settle elsewhere, the whaling port of Milford Haven suffered due to the removal of government support.

Mr. Dell, who visited Milford Haven this spring, found many reminders of the island in the Nantucket Georgian architecture, on gravestones recording the deaths of Starbucks and Folgers, and on streets named "Starbuck Road" and "Nantucket Avenue". The community has passed through successive periods of prosperity, depression and recovery.

Unlike Nantucket Milford Haven still relies on the sea for its main source of livelihood. A trawler fish market supplies the cities of the United Kingdom with a thousand tons of fish a week. Along the waterfront are drydocks, soon to be enlarged to handle the repair of the largest oil tankers now afloat, machine shops, warehouses, shipways, and cranes.

Despite these changes Mr. Dell found that the contribution of the Nantucket whalemens and their descendants to the early history of the town has never been forgotten. Visitors from the island will find a hospitable welcome.

Chairman for the afternoon was Mrs. Rozelle Coleman Jones, who recently found in her attic the diary of Abiel Coleman Folger, wife of Timothy Folger, sea captain, ship owner,

and merchant. Timothy, a cousin of Benjamin Franklin, was the first to chart the Gulf Stream. The discovery of Abiel's diary, which reveals much about daily life in Milford between 1806 and 1811, has revived local interest in this sister community.

The third talk in the series will be given on Tuesday, July 26, when Mr. Paul Whitten discusses the sheep industry on Nantucket and describes the popular shearing festivals.

July 16, 1955

## Old World Nantucket Colony Mr. Dell's Subject.

Mr. Burnham N. Dell will speak on the subject "Nantucket Plants a Colony in the Old World" at 3 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon, July 12, at the Friends Meeting House, Fair Street. This informal talk is the second in the series being conducted this summer by the Nantucket Historical Association.

The colony, planted by Nantucket whaling masters and their families in the late eighteenth century, was Milford Haven, Wales, which Mr. and Mrs. Dell visited this past winter. His curiosity about the town had been aroused by the diary of Abiel Coleman Folger, found recently by a grand-niece, Mrs. George Jones of Nantucket. Portions of the diary, kept from 1806 to 1811, appeared in the Association's quarterly, "Historic Nantucket", in April.

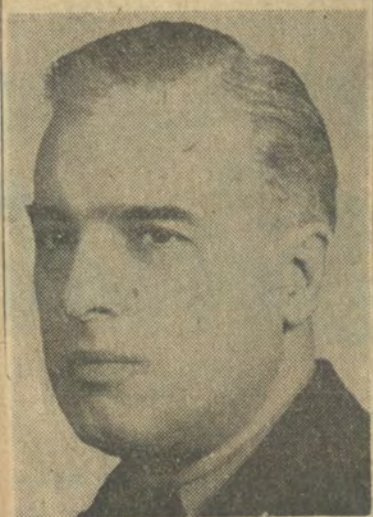
Although the historical link between these two communities is well known by each, there has been little communication between them. Mr. Dell's visit was "a voyage of mutual discovery".

Mr. Dell, an ordained minister and a retired faculty member of Princeton University, is extremely interested in Nantucket and its historic background. The talk which he will give on Tuesday is the continuation of his talk of last summer which emphasized the important part played by members of the Society of Friends in the history of the Island and in the maritime history of the nation.

Both members and the public are extended a cordial invitation by the Council of the Historical Association to attend this informal talk to which admission is free.

July 9, 1955





LAURENCE E. BUNKER

## Col. Bunker Is Lecturer At Nantucket

Special to The Standard-Times

NANTUCKET, July 21—Colonel Laurence E. Bunker, lawyer, lecturer, historian and former aide to General Douglas MacArthur, was featured speaker at the annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association held this week at Bennett Hall on Center Street. Subject of his lecture was "Ransom and Rewards—Some Dramatic Incidents in the Fortunes of Two Nantucket Captains."

Colonel Bunker is a direct descendant of William Bunker, who came to Nantucket with his mother, Jane Godfrey Bunker Swain, and his stepfather, Richard Swain, in the first group of settlers. His great-grandfather, James Madison Bunker, who lived at 5 Gay Street, was judge of probate and insolvency and a teacher in the Nantucket schools.

Before World War II, Colonel Bunker was legal assistant to John W. Davis of New York, former ambassador to England and Democratic candidate for President in 1924. During the war he served in various headquarters in Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines. In April, 1946, he became personal aide-de-camp to General MacArthur in Tokyo and served in that capacity through the occupation of Japan and the first 10 months of the Korean War. He returned to New York with the general in April, 1951 and ran MacArthur's New York office for the next 1½ years, retiring from active duty in November, 1952.

Since then Colonel Bunker has been practicing law and lecturing. His home is in Wellesley, where he is president of the newly-formed Wellesley Historical Society. He is also a councillor of the New England Historic Genealogical Society and a life member of the Nantucket Historical Association.

## Bunker-Swain Family Descendant Delights Meeting With Stories Of Island Captains

Incidents and experiences in the lives of two Nantucket sea captains were amusingly recounted by one of their descendants, Colonel Laurence Eliot Bunker of Wellesley, former aid to General Douglas MacArthur, at the annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association at Bennett Hall Tuesday afternoon.

Colonel Bunker, a direct descendant of William Bunker who came to Nantucket with his mother, Jane Godfrey Bunker Swain, and stepfather, Richard Swain, in the Island's first group of settlers, first told of some present day Bunker relations who have distinguished themselves. He named William Bunker, former ambassador to Italy and Argentina and current head of the Red Cross, and General Matthew Bunker Ridgeway.

The two sea captains who evolved from the Bunker strain were Paul West and Eber Bunker. Colonel Laurence told how West, as a cabin boy of 15, received a share of \$500 following the highly successful voyage of the Maria under Captain Benjamin Paddock. The youth realized that money could come from the sea and within a comparatively few years, the enterprising West was captain of his own vessel. West sailed from Dunkirk in 1798 with Archealeus

Hammond in the Cyrus, one of the Rotch ships registered from there, and the ship was captured by a frigate in Delagoa Bay. Colonel Bunker said West was sent to England aboard a British whaler which was taken by a French vessel. Sent to a French prison, he was immediately released through the intervention of the Rotch representative at Dunkirk and went to London where the Cyrus was about to be sold. West identified himself to the prospective purchasers and was invited to take out the vessel.

A captain at the age of 22, West made several profitable voyages to the Pacific and augmented his sea income by rigging his ship as a privateer. In a 10-year span the Nantucketer amassed a fortune of over \$35,000 and he retired just before the War of 1812. Returning to the Island, he bought the Uriah Swain house on Liberty Street and for 50 years served as one of the pillars of the community, the colonel said.

The second sea captain discussed by the former aid to General MacArthur was Eber Bunker, considered the father of Australian whaling. The colonel said that in 1791, Bunker took the William and Ann to Australia. The British had established a penal colony at Botany Bay on the southeast coast

of Australia in 1788 and whalers would take "involuntary passengers" there on the way to whaling grounds. By 1793, there were 20 British whaleships, most of them manned by a Nantucket captain, in the Pacific fishery.

Bunker was also the first whaler in New Zealand and took the first settlers to Tasmania. The Nantucket sea captain discovered a group of eight small islands off the Australian coast, the Bunker Islands, and commanded the Governor McQuerie, the first Australian-built ship.

Colonel Bunker said that his ancestor might have become one of

"One of our first moves in Japan was to order all political prisoners released," he said. "This gave a tremendous boost to Japanese Communism because the Communists were the ones in jail and it appeared to the people that they had the occupier's approbation."

Colonel Bunker said that when President Truman announced the United States would guard Formosa from invasion by Red China and also keep the Nationalists away from the Chinese coast, thousands of Communist soldiers who had been guarding the mainland across from Formosa were transported to Manchuria for the big push into Korea.

Speaking of the current Communist regime in China, the Wellesley Hills resident said the Mao government is dedicated to the extermination of all possible revolutionaries. He said the Sino-Soviet agreement, one of the most iniquitous pacts in history, states there are 100,000,000 too many persons in China and all possible steps should be taken to remove that surplus. Authorities estimate that some 25,000,000 Chinese have already been executed or have died of starvation, he said.

"Such a condition can't last," the colonel said, "for the family tradition in China is too strong. Almost every man has had some member of his family or clan murdered by Mao and his henchmen. That's why the Chinese Nationalists on Formosa want to re-enter China—to try and save their relatives."

However, Colonel Bunker said that Chiang's Formosa-based troops will disintegrate and their morale reach bottom if the prospect of invading their homeland is denied them.

He spoke of American foreign policy in China which he said had helped dethrone Chiang and put the Communists in power. General George Marshall tried to coerce the Chinese Republic in 1947 to allow Communists in its government and when refused, withheld ammunition from Chiang's troops

who were armed with American rifles. It was Marshall's boast that he disarmed 34 divisions with a stroke of his pen, Colonel Bunker said.

The Colonel said the United States should support any government, no matter how corrupt, that seeks to give its people individual freedom. He said we are constantly losing face by preaching our democratic principles and backing up Britain and France on their non-democratic colonial policies. The British have lost out internationally because their actions have been dictated by what is thought to be best for the British business man rather than by sincerity and honesty, he declared.

"The United States should get tough if it wants to earn the respect of other countries," he said. "We should remember how General MacArthur treated Reds in Japan. You can't use drawing room conventionalities to converse with murderous thugs spawned in a back alley."

July 1955

N.B. Standard  
July 2, 1955



## Col. Laurence E. Bunker Speaker At 61st Annual Meeting.

The sixty-first annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association was held Tuesday afternoon, July 19, at Bennett Hall. Guest speaker was Col. Laurence E. Bunker, lecturer, lawyer, historian, and former aide to General Douglas MacArthur.

The meeting was called to order at three o'clock by the president, Mrs. Nancy S. Adams, who welcomed everyone graciously. Mrs. Adams announced the business meeting would be brief and called upon the secretary, Mr. George W. Jones, who read the report of the last annual meeting.

As the treasurer's report and others are printed in the current issue of "Historic Nantucket", it was voted to dispense with reading them.

In presenting her second report as president of the Association, Mrs. Adams touched briefly on the work done by the Association in answering correspondence concerning genealogy. She expressed her appreciation to Mr. W. Ripley Nelson, editor of "Historic Nantucket" whose serious illness during the winter failed to deter him from his editorial duties or from preparing weekly publicity releases. She also thanked the editors of the island newspapers for their courteous assistance and generosity in giving space for the publicity. This year the Association issued two publications — "Folk Art of the American Whaleman" and "Quakerism on Nantucket".

Mrs. Adams spoke briefly of representing the Association at several meetings of the Bay State Historical League in which she serves as Director-at-Large and of speaking this spring at the newly formed Historical Society in Harwich, Mass. She and Mr. Jones attended committee hearings in Boston prior to the passing of State legislation establishing the Main Street area and land in Sconset as historic districts.

Mrs. Adams said the finances of the organization were in capable hands, the membership numbers 1,017, and many new accessions have been received.

Mrs. Adams said the series of informal talks which were held last summer on Tuesday afternoons at the Friends Meeting House, Fair Street, are being continued this summer. In February another Winter Gam was enjoyed by the year-round residents who gathered to reminisce.

This year, the president said, the Association has renewed its custom of giving prizes to high school students. Winners were William Hoadley for his essay on "Nantucket Newspapers" and Kenneth Duce of the Vocational School for his summary of Nantucket history.

Mrs. Adams reminded members of the 25th anniversary of the Whaling Museum and called it a memorial to former president William F. Macy and his efforts in its establishment and to her father, George A. Grant, first custodian.

The present custodian, she said, is "Archie" Cartwright, replacing Wallace Long who served a number of years and is now on leave of absence. Mrs. Adams said, "We miss Wallace and we trust that courage and faith will give him restored health."

The president expressed her appreciation to the staff of custodians and hostesses who help to maintain cordial relations with the many visitors and to the chairmen of exhibits for their devoted efforts.

In bringing her report to a close, Mrs. Adams expressed the need of the Association for a younger generation of workers who will have an appreciation of the debt owed to its founders and who will carry on its work. She said, "We sincerely hope so, for the future grows out of the past. The past was rich and inspiring and gives us the right to believe the future will be the same."

The report of the nominating committee was presented by Mrs. George W. Jones, and it was voted that the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for the election of the following officers for the ensuing year: President, Mrs. Adams; vice-presidents, Howard U. Chase, Everett U. Crosby, Burnham N. Dell, Grace Brown Gardner, George W. Jones, and W. Ripley Nelson; secretary, George W. Jones; treasurer, Mrs. Elizabeth B. Worth; auditor, Ormonde F. Ingall; councillor (until 1958) Stokely W. Morgan, (until 1959) Albert F. Egan, Jr., and Mrs. Cyril C. Ross.

Mrs. Adams introduced Mr. Gordon Harriss who is visiting Nantucket from Milford Haven, Wales. Local interest in this community from which Nantucketers once carried on whaling ventures in the early 19th century, has been revived through the discovery of the diary of Abiel Coleman Folger, wife of Timothy, and by a visit made recently by Mr. and Mrs. Dell while traveling in the United Kingdom. Mr. Harriss expressed his interest in the link between Milford and Nantucket and his pleasure in visiting the island.

In introducing Col. Laurence E. Bunker, the speaker of the afternoon, Mrs. Adams spoke of his many ties with Nantucket through the Bunker family.

Colonel Bunker termed his talk of his Nantucket cousins on the subject of "Ransom and Rewards" a one-sided gam about two Nantucket whaling captains in the Bunker family, Paul West and Ebor Bunker.

He named among the recent famous Bunkers; Ellsworth Bunker, former ambassador to Argentina and Italy and now head of the American Red Cross; Arthur Bunker, president of the Climax Molybdenum; Dennis Miller Bunker, American artist, and Gen. Matthew Bunker Ridgeway.

The speaker traced the descent of Capt. Paul West through five generations from Elizabeth Bunker, who came to Nantucket in the first group of settlers in 1659 with her mother Jane Godfrey Bunker Swain and her step-father Richard Swain. Paul West advanced from cabin boy at fifteen to captain in seven years with more than the usual measure of success.

Col. Bunker told of West's experience as mate of the ship *Cyrus*, one of the Rotch vessels commanded by Capt. Archaeus Mammond. Captured by the British and then the French, he was released through the efforts of Capt. William Moers, then the Rotch representative at Dunkirk, in

time to be given command of the *Cyrus*, then under new ownership in London.

The fortune which enabled Paul West to retire at 34 was gained through successful whaling voyages despite the family tradition that much of his wealth was obtained by having ransomed an important personage aboard a French ship which he is believed to have captured.

In 1815, Col. Bunker said, Paul West came to Nantucket with his wife Phebe, daughter of Benjamin Hussey of Dunkirk, and purchased the Uriah Swain House, 5 Liberty Street, where he lived and took an active part in community affairs for the next 50 years.

Among the collection of the Historical Museum on Fair Street, the speaker said, is a reproduction, made by Moses Joy of the famous cherry stone, hollowed out to contain a number of tiny silver spoons. The original was Paul West's gift to his bride in London in 1812.

Col. Bunker said that during his World War II assignment in Australia he became curious about the group of Bunker Islands off the east coast, and about Bunker Hill in Sydney. In tracing the origin of their name, he learned about Captain Ebor Bunker of Nantucket, who became the first whaler in New Zealand waters and made a number of successful voyages. Capt. Bunker brought the first pair of black swans to England as a gift to George III. He later received lands in Tasmania and at Sydney by royal grant.

Col. Bunker then told briefly of some personal experiences while stationed in Australia, including a dinner party attended by a young lieutenant in the Royal Navy who is now Prince Philip of England.

The meeting closed with the audience giving the speaker a rising vote of thanks.

July 23, 1955



## Island Sheep Festival Recalled In Talk

Days of Nantucket sheepherding and the annual, highly-awaited shearing festival were recounted Tuesday afternoon at Friends Meeting House by Paul Whitten, former principal of the Cyrus Peirce School and current head of the Bliss School in Attleboro. The talk was the third in a Summer series sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mr. Whitten, who married a Nantucket girl and is now a Summer resident, said many of the early Island settlers were well versed in the care of sheep, having had flocks in England. The terrain of Nantucket was well suited for the wool-bearers and they had few natural enemies. He said that at the height of the sheep industry here there were some 10,000 to 15,000 animals on the Island.

Many of the owners pooled their land into "commons" for sheep grazing and ordinances were passed for the extermination of dogs and rats whom it was felt were injurious to the herds. A rat bounty of 12 cents a head was paid by the Selectmen and proved a ready source of income to many Nantucket youngsters, Mr. Whitten said.

Pens were erected on the moors and filled with hay to help the animals through the Winter, but many of them wandered into town in search of warmth and food. The grass of Mathia Gardner which she needed for her cow was eaten by some of the wandering invaders, but the Selectmen grandly told her she could go to Coatee and mow all she wanted, Mr. Whitten said.

On the first of the week nearest June 20th the Nantucket Quakers held their annual sheepshearing festival on the shores of Miacomet Pond. A roundup on horseback, foot and with dogs, much in the manner practiced by cowboys, brought the sheep from all over the Island into a mile-long pen. After the sheep were washed, tents and floors were made of sailcloth for the shearing, the former Nantucket principal said.

The festivities began with a procession from town led by the Selectmen in their most elegant dress. Next came the upper bracket families, then the tradespeople, the sailors and finally the two-wheeled carts filled with wares to sell at the festival.

Mr. Whitten said that each family set up a tent and sold tasty food, handcraft and souvenirs brought from the corners of the world by seafaring husbands and sons. On the morning of the shearing day, the Selectmen sat down and breakfast began. "Quaker frugality" went something like this: toast, broiled salmon, veal cutlets, mutton, spiced ham, beefsteak smothered in butter, fish and strong coffee and tea.

For the children the sheepshearing festival meant two days off from school and they collected scrap iron weeks prior in order to have a few pennies to buy with at the gala event.

A large platform for dancing was raised in the big tent and many returned mariners who had learned fancy steps from natives in the South Seas were busy instructing the village girls. Mr. Whitten said the sailors' enthusiasm increased greatly with the partaking of liberal quantities of spruce beer.

Mr. Whitten told of some of the individuals who were highlighted at these festivals. One was Jacob Jones, a white-washer, who was famous with his wife for serving the most delicious food at the festival. Another was "Frank the Fiddler", a blind musician from the Cape, who appeared at every shearing. Barney Gould was a great pedestrian who walked prodigious distances.

The festival became so popular that in 1832 an excursion aboard the King Phillip was run from Fall River, but in 1846 the sheep industry in Nantucket was in its last days. Laws were passed that sheep must be on their owner's land or in his pen and this end of the "commons" plus a population drop spelled doom for sheep on the Island. Gold had been discovered in California and young men were leaving the Island in droves. The last sheep festival was held in 1847 with William B. Starbuck presiding, Mr. Whitten said.

## Sheep Shearing Festivals Of Old Nantucket.

"The sheep industry on Nantucket and the shearing festival, once the outstanding social event of the year, are now just a memory," Mr. Paul Whitten, former Cyrus Peirce School principal, told his audience at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday afternoon. The talk was the third in a series on Old-Time Nantucket being sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association during July and August.

Mr. Whitten told his audience that sheep were introduced on the island shortly after the first settlers arrived in 1659. Nantucket's 30,000 acres were well adapted to sheep raising, for here the animals had few natural enemies, and the flocks at one time numbered nearly fifteen thousand head. Grazing lands, fenced off for the sheep, were held in common on a shareholding basis rather than by individual survey, and each share was determined by the acreage necessary to support one sheep for a year.

The speaker explained that sheep were protected by local legislation from earliest times. Indians, their wild dogs, and hogs were a problem to sheepowners. One ordinance paid a twelve-cent bounty for exterminating rats, but was later amended to exclude baby rats which, for some reason, were not considered potentially harmful. In winter sheep herders were appointed by the town, pens were built, and hay was provided. Strays were kept from wandering into town by the New Town Gate.

Mr. Whitten said that the sheep festivals were traditionally held around June 20th each year on the shore of Miacomet Pond, west of the Surfside Road. Early on a Saturday or Sunday morning sheepowners on horseback, assisted by dogs, rounded up the sheep and drove them into a huge pen, one mile long, on the shores of the pond. Several days were required for separating the sheep, marking the young, and washing. When shearing day finally arrived the townspeople formed a huge procession headed by the town fathers and local dignitaries in "best bib and tucker", with carts and wagons forming at the rear behind excited children and barking dogs. Each family who could afford one pitched a tent near the shearing pens and many sold foods, handwork, and souvenirs to visitors.

A shearing day breakfast as described by the speaker was a feast of monumental proportions. Quaker gourmets progressed from "mountains of toast" to broiled salmon, veal, ham, mutton, "beef steaks swimming in butter" and the "finest flavoured fish which but an hour before were sporting the sea", all washed down with mugs of strong coffee or tea, to the "piece de resistance", quahogs, baked in the shell, then lightly salted and peppered and dripping with butter—a delicacy not to be scorned by the most discriminating palate.

The center of social activity, Mr. Whitten said, was the Big Tent. On the "dancing board" or platform in the middle, Nantucket whalers led prim Nantucket maids in sprightly dance, improvising with the latest steps from the South Seas. Colorful

personalities of by-gone festivals were Peter Folger, local wit, colored-man, "Jacob Jones Whitewash", beloved and respected, and Blind Frank the Fiddler with his merry song, each verse ending "Tu I can't and tu I can, all the way to the shearing pen."

The speaker told of a round-trip excursion from Rhode Island to Nantucket for three dollars on June 14, 1832, testimonial to the growing popularity of these festivals. On one occasion the New Bedford Guards came bringing their band to play under the Big Tent, much to the delight of the local girls who had learned from the newspaper that the group would include a number of bachelors.

Mr. Whitten explained that the fleece was taken in carts and wagons to warehouses in town. The most popular was the Big Shop, a former whaleboat-building shop, at the corner of Milk Street and Quaker Road, now the home of Mr. James Glidden and once owned by Arthur H. Gardner, father of Miss Grace Brown Gardner.

However, the speaker related, as the number of heirs increased, lawsuits over the undivided sheep commons, known as the "sheep wars", increased, bringing about the decline of the industry and ending the ever-popular shearing festivals. The last one was held on June 24, 1846, on the farm of Harrison Gardner at Quaise.

Today, Mr. Whitten said, only two flocks are in existence on Nantucket. Mr. John Bartlett keeps a hundred sheep out along the Cisco shore, and about 35 sheep are owned by Henry Coffin of Sconset, who is continuing a family tradition of sheep-raising.

July 29, 1955

July 29, 1955

Whitten



## Old Houses and Romantic Past Subject of Talk by Mrs. Lyon.

Old Nantucket houses represent a romantic past and must be preserved, Mrs. Elias J. Lyon, former social worker and teacher, told her audience at the Friends Meeting House on August 2. The speaker talked about her home and about a number of old houses with which she has become acquainted through real estate dealings since coming to the island 20 years ago. Her talk was the fourth in a series sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association on Tuesday afternoons.

Nantucket houses are not pretentious, but have a quality of dignity, solidity, and ruggedness which grew out of a pride of workmanship not found in the modern house, the speaker said.

Mrs. Lyon expressed her fears that the younger generation, living in an age when moral and spiritual values often seem out of date, will fail to preserve these relics of an age when Nantucket was a center of culture. She also pointed out that an old house, restored and in good condition, represented greater tax income to the town.

Only four houses on the island have never been sold and remain the property of descendants of the original builders—the house now occupied by Miss Grace Brown Gardner on Milk Street, Mrs. Ditmars' house on Main Street, the "Middle Brick", and the Caldwell house on lower Pleasant Street. Mrs. Lyon enumerated.

The speaker said she and Mr. Lyon have restored four houses on Nantucket. In her pre-Revolutionary house at 16 Pleasant Street, once owned by a Peter Coffin, she discovered near the central chimney a small closet to the attic which was once used to raise dough. She regrets that the original walls of old shell plaster were in poor condition and had to be replaced by modern walls. She advised those present that, despite its blistered appearance, such plaster is a real find, deserving preservation and worthy of display.

She gave several examples of the effect of present economic conditions on real estate values since the turn of the century. A former owner of 16 Pleasant Street paid \$6.25 in taxes. She now has a standing offer of more than \$20,000 for the house in its present state of restoration.

Mr. Lyon restored the building at the head of Old North Wharf, a former boat shop owned by John Cartwright, which now serves as their office and summer home, the speaker said.

In restoring the Little Bookshop at 2 Quince Street, once owned by a Captain Myrick, a well was discovered under the doorstep. Mrs. Lyon said that most recently they have worked on 32 Pine Street.

Each house has its romance—some fascinating architectural feature or an owner of local historical interest, the speaker said. She then proceeded to give the highlights of a number of old houses.

One Pleasant Street, built in 1837 by William Macy for William Crosby, housed the first Chickering piano on the island and is mentioned in the book "Through the Hawse-Hole" by Florence Bennett Anderson.

Six Pleasant Street was more recently owned by author William O. Stevens.

Number 8 Pleasant Street was the home of Walter Folger, who designed an intricate astronomical clock now on display at the Historical Museum, Fair Street.

Fifteen Pleasant Street, which has its original shell walls, was named in the will of Obed Macy to his sons, Thomas, William, and Peter, along with one-eighth share of Old North Wharf and 307 and seven-two hundredths shares of Straight Wharf. The estate of "Moors End", 19 Pleasant Street, built by Jared Coffin, once sold for \$2,350.

The present home of William Coffin on Lily Street appears with a mill in an old Nantucket picture. Thirty-one Lily Street, the home of Jared Jerome, was moved from Fair Street in 1832 and another house was added to it. The house on Gull Island, built by Charles Gardner in 1750, was the site of a fort during the French and Indian War. Elizabeth Hollister Frost establishes a connection between this house and the Elihu Coleman house, 1720, on Madaket Road, in her book "This Side of Land". The property was an island at the time when the Lily Pond, bounded by West Chester, North Liberty, Lily, and Centre Streets, connected with the harbor, and contained sufficient water for the operation of a grist mill and a fulling mill. The pond was drained accidentally by a little girl digging with a clamshell one evening. The damage was not discovered till the next day, and the dam was never rebuilt, the speaker related.

The Roosevelt House on West Chester Street once belonged to Henry Snow, captain of the "Island City".

The David Cartwright house on Prospect Street, a perfect example of New England architecture, was put through the Land Court only after the descendants of the 10 Cartwright heirs had been traced all over the United States. Mrs. Lyon told of the disrepute with which Nantucket deeds, although usually clear, are held by "off-island lawyers" and stated that a Land Court title simplified transfer of ownership.

She said, "Teachmore" on Quaker Lane was once a Penny School. The Ernst House, Quartermile Hill, formerly owned by Gardners and Snows, was moved from Main Street. A gambrel roof is a feature of the Yates house on Pine Street, built by Jethro Gardner. The timbers in the corners of the rooms at the Fosbinder house, 21 Mill Street, are an example of ship's carpentry. Mrs. Cushman celebrated her 102nd birthday in her home on Prospect Street. The Carley House on Bloom Street, once the home of "Charlie the Oysterman", a Starbuck, has a beehive Dutch oven. 127 Main Street, built by Folgers, was the home of Albert Bunker, who kept a store at the Monument. Five Fair Street, now owned by Dr. H. Brooks Walker, lost its widow's walk in a recent hurricane. A former owner, Capt. Chase, lost his daughter to a "travelling musician", one of the famous Hutchinsons.

On close acquaintance with a Nantucket house, Mrs. Lyon told her audience, you will find yourself trying to recreate the lives of the people who lived in it. Each house has a story to tell.

Will Gardner, author of "Three Bricks and Three Brothers" and "The Clock that Talks", chairman for the afternoon, spoke briefly of current interest in Nantucket houses. Everett U. Crosby has published the book "95% Perfect", about island architecture. Miss Grace Brown Gardner is collecting pictures and clippings in a scrapbook of Nantucket houses and their occupants. Dr. Gardner and Mr. Crosby are making a file of the oldest houses on Nantucket, relying largely on summer news items appearing when houses have been open to the public as part of the annual Nantucket Cottage Hospital Drive.

Before introducing the speaker, Dr. Gardner gave a brief history of his own home at 33 Orange Street. Built in 1760 by a Wyer for his Boston bride, it was bequeathed to their son, Christopher, a whaling master. Other owners were Seth Swift, first Unitarian minister, Peter Macy, brother of Obed the historian, and George Tracy who died of yellow fever in the Civil War and willed the house to his mother.

Aug. 6, 1955

## Resident Gives Talk On Old Island Houses

Interesting histories of a number of old Nantucket houses were recounted Tuesday afternoon at Friends Meeting House by Mrs. Elias J. Lyon in the fourth of a series of lectures on old-time Nantucket sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mrs. Lyon, speaking of a number of Colonial and early 1800 houses, told the audience that the aged structures have solidity, thoughtfulness of construction and integrity not found in today's elegant ranch houses and modern pre-fabs. She said old Nantucket houses are the island's heritage, products of one of the seaports which built America.

She mentioned Nantucket as a former center of culture and education as well as seafaring and said it could be again. Mrs. Lyon said that mass advertising and crowds of people and cars for a two-month period was not the answer to island economy.

Speaking of early Nantucket homes, she said that, to her knowledge, there are only four houses here which have never been sold since they were built. Mrs. John Ditmars house on Main Street, Miss Grace Brown Gardner's house on Mill Street, the middle Brick on Main Street and the Caldwell House on Pleasant Street.

Mrs. Lyon said her own home at 16 Pleasant Street, a pre-Revolutionary type traced back to two Peter Coffins, had unique old shell walls. In the old days, she explained, shells were used in the composition of plaster and what seem to be "blisters" on the walls of some old places, are actually highly-desired signs of antiquity. Her house has four fireplaces and

one central chimney. An interesting feature of her house is a small closet used to keep bread dough warm at night, she said.

Mrs. Lyon said that in 1901 her home was priced at \$400 and now she and her husband have refused offers of \$25,000 for it. They were about to give up their old home and build a new one, but just couldn't go through with it because of personal attachment, she said.

She told of some Revolutionary and early-1800 houses with which she is familiar. Miss Mattie Empson's One Pleasant Street was built in 1837 for William Crosby by William Macy. The owner has refused to allow any changes in the house and when its days as a restaurant are over, it will become an old Nantucket home again, she said.

Mrs. Lyon said the house at 8 Pleasant Street, valued at only \$700 in 1901, helped prove that old houses are only for certain people. She said it rented one Summer to a family who did nothing but complain. The next season it was taken by a woman who said its charm and intimacy had done a great deal to bring her peace of mind.

The former Obed Macy house at 15 Pleasant St. has original shell walls and the Crosby Graham house on Lily St. was built on Fair Street by Benjamin Chace and moved to Lily in the 1830's, Mrs. Lyon said.

Graham Magee's Gull Island Lane home was built in 1750 by Christopher Gardner and is believed to have been a fort site during the French and Indian wars.

Mrs. Lyon touched briefly on the John L. Kolle house on Main Street which has an old-fashioned beehive dutch oven. The house was once owned by a unique individual known as "Charley the Oysterman."

She said the Rev. Robert Metters house on Main Street, once owned by Folgers and Macys, has a guest cottage in its back garden which was occupied for a time by Novelist John P. Marquand.

Other old Nantucket houses mentioned by Mrs. Lyon were at 6 Pleasant, 20 Pleasant, the George Roosevelt residence on West Chester, the David Cartwright house on Prospect, the old "Penny-a-Day" school on Quaker Road, the Charles Ernst house on Quartermile Hill, the Dr. Brooks Walker house on Fair Street, 32 Pine and 2 Quince.

Aug. 5, 1955



### "Nantucket and Photography" Talk by Louis Davidson.

To capture the spirit of Nantucket in a photograph, you must get to know it, Mr. Louis S. Davidson, president of the Camera Club of New York, told his audience on Tuesday afternoon at the Friends Meeting House. His talk on "Nantucket and Photography" was the fifth in the series being sponsored this summer by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mr. Davidson said that modern photography is a far cry from the darkened tents and the sensitized plates which required instantaneous developing that complicated the lives of the earliest photographers. Today by following the printed directions accompanying a box camera it is possible for anyone to take good pictures.

A sharp negative is like "money in the bank and can be drawn on regularly," the speaker said. To achieve this one need remember only two things: first, determine the focus in terms of your distance from the subject, and then don't move the camera.

For developing prints Mr. Davidson recommended the services of a professional photo finisher except when a picture has been taken under special conditions.

He said that getting a "record shot" of a scene "the way you saw it" was fun; but to get artistic results it was necessary to study the locale to learn the best lighting conditions — the proper season of the year and the correct time of day. For example, he said, Old North Wharf is best photographed in the early morning or late evening in midsummer. Late afternoon sun provides more shadow and greater depth.

Photography is an effective medium of texture and detail, the speaker stated. A picture with architectural detail is difficult to obtain in Nantucket where streets are narrow, houses are crowded, and distances are altogether too short.

Mr. Davidson then showed a few carefully selected photographs which illustrated the basic techniques he emphasized — the Hidden Forest, "Castles" a beach scene, Great Point light, a Nantucket doorway, and several portrait studies which included Austin Strong, "Niki" Carpenko, Jay Gibbs, Weston Esau, and "Charlie" Chase.

In concluding the speaker made the following suggestions: Take a picture at the moment it appeals to you, don't wait; it may change and you will lose the effect you wanted to preserve. Don't show too many things in one picture. If someone agrees to pose for you, take the picture as quickly as possible; and be sure to send them a print. With experience and by learning from others a photographer learns care and good taste. The spirit of Nantucket is to be found in the clear atmosphere and in clean, sharp white lines, Mr. Davidson said.

In the question period which followed Mr. Davidson touched briefly on the techniques of developing color and sepia prints. He also demonstrated methods of mounting pictures.

Chairman for the afternoon was Mr. Everett U. Crosby.

### Whalemen's Adventures Recalled By Edouard A. Stackpole.

The adventures of the Nantucket whalemen are an important part of Nantucket's heritage, Edouard A. Stackpole, Curator of Mystic Seaport and the Marine Museum at Mystic, Conn., told his audience at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday afternoon. This talk was the sixth in a series about Old Time Nantucket being sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association this summer.

Mr. Stackpole said his interest in the Nantucket whalemen began during his boyhood on Mill Hill in a house once owned by a whaleman. He recalled the rich baritone voice of Joe Lewis, Colored whaleman, singing the chantey, "Blow Ye Winds in the Morning", and wished that more were known about the music of the whaleman. Looking down to the harbor from Mill Hill in those days, he found symbolism in the fact that all the land seemed to slope toward it. This enterprise of the sea brought wealth to Nantucketers. The town was built by whale oil.

The geographical location of Nantucket at the hub of the maritime universe, the Quaker religion, and the self-reliant hardiness of the people formed an unbeatable trio. Nantucket whalemen tracked the world, charted its waters and studied its winds and ocean currents long before oceanography gained importance as a science, the historian stated. Whaling was a community enterprise—practical socialism in its highest sense.

The adventures of a single whaling captain would supply more than enough material for an afternoon's talk, Mr. Stackpole said. He could only hope to highlight a few. He spoke briefly of Capt. Charles Grant, successful whaleman, Capt. Alexander Chase whose daughter married one of the Hutchinson singers, and Capt. Brock who took his daughter around Cape Horn. Obed Starbuck, who built a home on Fair Street, now the Ship's Inn, sailed from Nantucket as a young man on the ship "Hero". During this voyage he led a successful attack to recapture the ship from a Spanish pirate and was rewarded by being made master on her next voyage.

The former association president spoke of two Nantucket Pinkhams. Andrew, who had lost two vessels in the Napoleonic wars, foresaw the War of 1812 and moved to Ohio where he later named the town of Bantam for a favorite port. Lieut. Alexander Pinkham, educated in the fore-castle of a whaler, enlisted in the Navy at 21. While on a walking tour of Scotland, he visited the home of John Paul Jones. Disturbed by its run-down condition, he paid to have the roof repaired and arranged to have it occupied by the wife of a local fisherman. When he returned to this country a niece of Jones presented him with a medallion of the Naval hero painted in Paris before his death. The medallion is now on display at the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

George Pollard, captain of the whaleship "Essex", and Owen Chase, mate, were an ill-fated pair. Their ship having been struck and sunk by a whale, the two men survived 90 days in whaleboats on the open sea by subsisting on human flesh. This terrible

event formed part of the factual background which led to the writing of "Moby Dick", by Herman Melville, who later came to Nantucket and met George Pollard, thought to be the pattern for Captain Ahab.

Mr. Stackpole said he liked to visualize the meeting of these two men at night when Melville could scan the haggard face of Pollard, town watchman, illuminated by his lamp. After a successful career as whaling master, Owen Chase also retired on Nantucket. Never able to forget the harsh treatment dealt by fate in his early years, he used to hide crackers in his attic against the day when he might again be faced with starvation.

Mr. Stackpole said he had recently restored a 26-foot whaleboat. When he had sailed her he had a much greater respect for the seamanship of the whaleman.

Another adventurous Nantucket whaleman was William Cary, stranded from the whaleship "Oeno" among the cannibalistic Fiji Islanders. Captured and recaptured by lesser island chiefs, he was saved and ultimately returned to Nantucket through the efforts of the most powerful Fiji chief whom he recognized as his old schoolmate, David Whippley. One of the most famous whalemen who "went native", he was known to have eaten 50 men. "A man of prodigious appetite", the historian quipped. David Whippley was extremely valuable as an interpreter when the Wilkes Expedition arrived at the Fijis in 1840.

Of interest as a literary whaleman was William Hussey Macy who described his own experiences in the "Log of the Arethusa". Civil War Veteran and local registrar of deeds, he wrote voluminously for contemporary newspapers and magazines, and inaugurated the "Here and There" column in The Inquirer and Mirror, the speaker said.

In conclusion Mr. Stackpole talked briefly of other adventurous whalemen. Of Macys—Josiah, later merchant and banker in New York with a profitable packet service to Liverpool, and R. H. whose business ventures on Nantucket, at Haverhill and Boston, and in California during the Gold Rush days had ended in failure until he set up a store in New York. Of Benjamin Hussey whose outsize head must have contained "a bushel of brains" and who walked the streets of Dunkirk, France, seeking persons to inoculate for smallpox. Of Capt. William Mooers who flew the first American flag in a British port and at 80 took his whaleship to Davis Straits. The stories of these men are Nantucket's heritage and should never be forgotten.

Aug. 20, 1955

Davidson

Aug. 13, 1955



### Mrs. James Clinton Andrews And the "Shooting Journal".

Much work remains to be done by year round observers before a complete picture of Nantucket land and shore bird populations can be made known. Mrs. James Clinton Andrews, author and ornithologist, told her audience at the Friends Meeting-House on Tuesday afternoon. Her talk was the seventh in the series sponsored this summer by the Nantucket Historical Association.

When comparing her own observations with earlier records, Mrs. Andrews found those for the nineteenth century very scarce. Thoreau had made one visit to the island and noted the birds he saw. Ornithologists Dr. Brewer and J. A. Allen came prior to 1875 and collected a few specimens. William Brewster, active in the Nut-hall Bird Club, the first of its kind in this country, was on the island between 1870 and 1878. He was primarily interested in shore birds although he noted the land bird flights and his is the only Tennessee warbler record to date. Therefore the shooting journal of George H. Mackay is unique and its records of game birds from 1862 to 1922 are a gold-mine of information. 300 copies were privately printed by ornithologist John C. Phillips in 1927, and it is now a collector's item.

George H. Mackay, son of a Boston merchant in the East India trade, first came to Nantucket in 1872 on a shooting expedition. Here he met Maria Mitchell Starbuck, daughter of Matthew, who owned the "Middle Brick" on Main Street. He married her the next year and from then on spent more and more time here until his death at 93 in 1937. His shooting journal was begun in his early teens and records hunting trips to other parts of the country as well, but the major record concerns Nantucket, the speaker said.

Mackay's interests made him a naturalist and ornithologist as well as a sportsman, although hunting was his first love, Mrs. Andrews said. He wrote innumerable articles for "The Auk", the leading ornithological magazine. He frequently shot and made study skins or mounted specimens of birds he saw and sent them to the Smithsonian Institute or the Boston Society of Natural History for identification. His journal contains the first mocking bird record for Nantucket, although he did not recognize it as a year-round resident.

Mackay noted tremendous flocks of game birds during the 1870's and 1880's. In 1875 on Muskeget he saw a flock of 25,000 "coots" (American scoter), and one of 12,000 eiders. In 1880 he witnessed the last great fall migration of golden plover which had once been so numerous that in 1863 their flight had darkened the sun and enterprising Nantucketers had exhausted supplies of ammunition on the island in shooting this delicacy for the market. During these years he also recorded success in shooting oldsquaws, Hudsonian curlew, upland plover, yellow-legs, "greenheads", "pale bellies", and the "doughbird" or Eskimo curlew. Mackay's life spanned the critical years of birdshooting in the United States, Mrs. Andrews said.

He witnessed the great hunting days and lived to become an active conservationist who realized the "off-years" of the 1890's were actually an indication that the golden plover, Eskimo curlew, heath hen, and the Arctic tern, then popular as the "bird on Nellie's hat", were in danger of becoming extinct. He worked for the passing of state and local laws to limit the shooting of game birds and to establish definite hunting seasons. He persuaded the Selectmen on Nantucket to allocate \$100 to maintain a warden on Muskeget to protect the Arctic tern during their breeding season from the demands of the feather merchants. The history of the game bird in America has passed through seven stages—exploration, exploitation, exhaustion, rehabilitation, restriction, refuge, and research, Mrs. Andrews explained. George H. Mackay experienced all but the first during his life.

Since 1900, the leading ornithologists who visited the island were Edward Howe Forbush, authority on land birds, John C. Phillips, water birds, and W. Sprague Brooks who published the first list of Nantucket birds under the auspices of the Maria Mitchell Association. The author stated that she had referred to all existing records to supplement her own observations when preparing "Birds of Nantucket" for publication in 1948. Interest is growing, but much work remains.

During her lecture Mrs. Andrews exhibited mounted specimens of game birds mentioned by Mackay as well as several interesting old decoys.

Miss Helen Winslow was chairman for the afternoon.

### Shooting Journal Subject Of Talk

Gamebird hunting on Nantucket and accounts from the unique shooting journal of a late 19th century sportsman were the subject of a talk by Mrs. J. Clinton Andrews Tuesday afternoon at Friends Meeting House. It was the seventh in a series of Summer lectures sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mrs. Andrews, who holds a graduate degree in ornithology and taught at Miami University in Oxford, O., gave a brief account of the bird record kept before the appearance on the Island in 1872 of sportsman, naturalist, ornithologist and conservationist George H. Mackay. William Henry Thoreau made one visit to the Island prior to Mr. Mackay's first shooting jaunt here, she said, and noted a few types of birds. J. A. Allen of Cambridge collected a few species and noted some others and William Brewster collected shore

birds on Nantucket.

Mrs. Andrews said that Mr. Mackay, born in Boston in 1845, was the son of a wealthy merchant and shipowner and at 19 sailed on one of his father's ships as supercargo. Later becoming head of the family business in Boston, he devoted a great deal of time to his passion for hunting, roaming as far west as Minnesota in search of wild fowl. He began very early to keep a record of all birds he shot and those seen on hunting trips, too, Mrs. Andrews said.

The former Nantucket High School science teacher related that in the 1850's the Island did a large business by shooting and shipping birds to Boston and New York. Each year eager Nantucketers exhausted their ammunition so great was the bird population. By 1870 the Island had become a favorite hunting spot for wealthy sportsmen. Mr. Mackay, who married Maria Mitchell Starbuck in 1873, began to spend his Summers here and continued to do so until his death in 1937, Mrs. Andrews said. She said the sportsman began to keep his log book of birds in 1865 and maintained it until 1922, although he did little shooting after the turn of the century.

Mr. Mackay said in his journal, 300 copies of which were privately printed by John C. Phillips in 1927, that he was not sure of the shooting possibilities in Nantucket after his first visit here in 1872.

Mrs. Andrews said the shooting journal was also a document of the methods used in the last century of hunting wild birds. She mentioned the practice of burning over ground and placing decoys out and showed lifesize brant decoys and flat duck silhouettes which were stuck in the ground to be seen by fowl wheeling in at angles to the ground. Another type of decoy shown was a two-piece metal model which when put together makes a normal bird figure.

Further accounts from the shooting journal read by Mrs. Andrews told of Mr. Mackay's second visit to Nantucket in August and September of 1874 and in April of that year when he enjoyed good shooting at Muskeget Island. He reported seeing flights of more than 25,000 coot and 12,000 ducks.

In 1878 he told of hunting on Coatsue and recorded the first mockingbird seen on the Island. Mrs. Andrews said no one knows how they got here but that they are now year-round residents. Two years later was a banner year for the bagging of the coveted golden plover and in one day the Boston and Nantucket sportsman said he knocked down 56.

Mr. Mackay noted in a recapitulation of the shooting season of 1889 that there was a great scarcity of birds and called it a definite off-year. By 1897 the Eskimo curlew was headed for extinction, Mrs. Andrews said, because they were being gunned by the thousands during their Spring migration along the Mississippi flyway.

Even though Mr. Mackay was an avid hunter he was also a great conservationist, the co-author of "Birds of Nantucket" said. Witnessing the decline of America's bird population, he agitated for their protection and helped get the states to pass laws about terns. In the 1890's they were being slaughtered by the thousands to provide feathers and wings for ladies' hats, Mrs. Andrews said. Mr. Mackay persuaded the town of Nantucket to provide \$100 for a warden to protect the nesting birds on Tuckernuck Island.

Mrs. Andrews, speaking of the present condition of wild fowl in the United States, said six steps had already been taken. The first was exploration. When the early settlers came there were untold numbers of birds. Then followed exploitation when the fowl were killed off by the thousands and exhaustion when certain seemingly numberless species were gone. The steps in bringing the birds back were listed as restrictions, the establishment of laws as to the hunting of certain kinds of birds, season and numbers, the setting up of refuges and current research.

Mrs. Andrews mentioned two species, the passenger pigeon and the heath hen, which are now extinct because of unusual circumstances. The carrier pigeon was greatly depleted by unrestricted hunting but the reason for its extinction was the psychological factor that the female had to have numerous other birds around in order to lay eggs. As the number of pigeons dwindled, the egg-laying potential of each pigeon dwindled until the last of the species known died in a zoo in 1925, Mrs. Andrews said.

The heath hen, which used to abound on the Massachusetts coast, was rapidly being killed off so authorities gathered a number of the birds and sent them to Martha's Vineyard where they would be free from hunters and increase in numbers and strength. Unfortunately, they picked up a domestic fowl disease there and all died, Mrs. Andrews said.



### 'Sconset Fifty Years Ago.

Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson, speaking at the last of the summer series of talks sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association, spun a delightful string of reminiscences about 'Sconset and its famous Actors' Colony in the early years of this century. 'Sconset was remote and life was simple in those days before visitors arrived by air and news of hurricanes, baseball scores, and other matters of interest came promptly by radio. Actors then had long vacations since the theatres, without air conditioning, remained closed in the hot summer months. So the theatrical people, a gregarious race, adopted 'Sconset for a summer home.

Life was relaxed, attire was informal, entertainment was limited to parties at home and "doings" at the Casino. Mrs. Wilson embellished her talk with many interesting anecdotes about the famous theatrical personalities who made up the "cast" of life at 'Sconset in the good old days. This charming, casual way of life ended when Hollywood, radio, and air conditioned theatres provided the theatrical profession with year 'round employment.

Sept. 2, 1955

### 'Sconset Actors Colony Is Subject Of Talk

Experiences and recollections of the days at the turn of this century when 'Sconset was a secluded actors' colony were recounted Tuesday afternoon at Friends Meeting House by Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson, former co-director of Straight Wharf Theater and daughter of famous parents. Mrs. Wilson's talk was the last in a series of eight informal lectures sponsored this Summer by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mrs. Wilson said the actors who came to 'Sconset did not plan to start a thespian colony but were drawn by the remoteness and charm of the little village and enjoyed the opportunity to be out of the public eye for a while. And in those days, she said, actors took an "enforced Summer vacation" because the theaters, not being air conditioned, closed during the hot months and there was very little Summer stock activity.

Among the first of the Broadway crowd who came to the small cluster of rose-covered fishing shacks which constituted 'Sconset were Harry Woodruff and Mary Shaw. Miss Shaw had played the lead in Henrik Ibsen's "Ghosts,"

considered a very daring and controversial play for that period, Mrs. Wilson said.

She related that after her parents, George Fawcett and Percy Haswell, first made the trip from New York to 'Sconset, two straight weeks of rain almost persuaded them to give the place up and go to England for the Summer.

"Then the sun came out and 'Sconset began to spread its charm," the long-time Island resident said.

She said that her father, John Grout and Thomas Galvin helped plan the golf course on the 'Sconset road and when Mr. Fawcett returned to Broadway he boomed the merits of 'Sconset to his friends and colleagues at the Lambs' Club. His wife, in turn, praised the Island vacation spot to members of her company in Baltimore and the actors exodus to 'Sconset was underway.

Reminiscing about some of the famous personalities of the day who began to spend their Summers at 'Sconset, Mrs. Wilson spoke of Frank Gilmore who started the actors' Equity Union, matinee idol Harry Woodruff who built the first Hawaiian-style house on the Island and Robert Hillard who, despite the ease and casualness of 'Sconset dress, was

always a picture of sartorial splendor.

Mrs. Wilson mentioned that Mr. Woodruff was mobbed by Harvard students on the stage of a Boston theater because he had the temerity to appear in a play wearing on his sweater a Harvard "H" which he had not really won.

Another outstanding personality recalled by Mrs. Wilson was DeWolf Harper whom she described as a fascinating wit and raconteur. He was a musical comedy star and famous for his rendition of "Casey At The Bat" and a role in "H.M.S. Pinafore."

"He was not at all good looking," Mrs. Wilson said, "but after listening to him it was easy to see how he was able to run through six wives during his lifetime."

Another facet of life in 'Sconset was the addition of the men for the baseball New York Giants, she said. Giants owner John T. Brush and manager John "Muggsy" McGraw were both members of the Lambs Club and when their team won there was great rejoicing in 'Sconset. When they lost, she said, the town was plunged in gloom and the flag at the Marconi wireless station there which transmitted the scores by special arrangement was lowered to half mast.

One of the operators at the station, a 16-year-old youth from Hungary, was David Sarnoff RCA Board chairman, she said.

Favorite gathering places for the acting crowd at 'Sconset were the station of the old Nantucket railroad and the club house at the golf course, Mrs. Wilson said. The train was often greeted or wished bon voyage by a bugle-playing doctor who struck up an air whenever friends of his arrived or departed.

The actors began giving benefit performances for the Casino at the station and Mrs. Wilson said she remembered her father portraying chilling scenes from "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." So popular were the benefit shows that Nantucketers began hiring the train for special trips to see the performance.

One night, Mrs. Wilson related, the train steadfastly refused to make a small hill at Tom Nevers Head and the weary, homeward-bound Nantucketers discovered someone had greased the rails. The culprit was never caught.

There was great rivalry between the town and 'Sconset in golf and tennis and Mrs. Wilson said that only the marvelous athletic Roberts family kept the smaller village from being a constant loser.

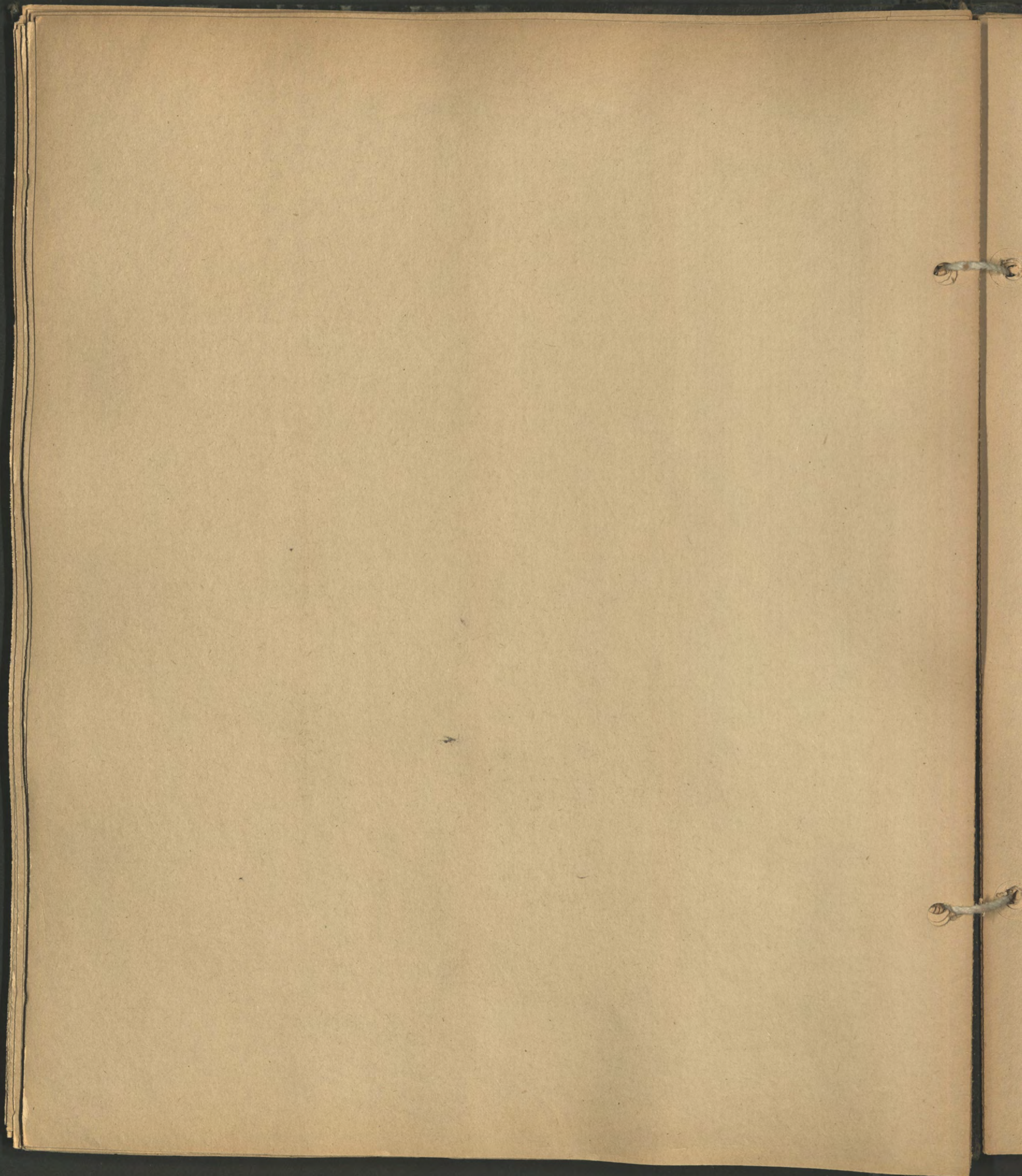
Actress Agnes Everett, seeking a more secure profession than her chosen one, opened a small ice cream parlor opposite the Casino and it grew steadily. Purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Raymond H. Wiley, it is now the Chanticleer, Mrs. Wilson said.

The ambling, impromptu pattern of 'Sconset life continued until World War I, she said. Then moving pictures, Summer stock, air conditioned theaters and radio brought an end to the actors' colony at 'Sconset which flourished for several decades.

Sept. 2, 1955

Fawcett







## George W. Jones New President Of Historical Association.

The sixty-second annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association was held on Tuesday afternoon at three o'clock, at the Unitarian Church on Orange Street.

President Nancy S. Adams extended a cordial word of welcome to the one hundred or so members who attended before calling upon the secretary, Miss Ethel Anderson, to read the minutes of the last annual meeting.

Since the annual reports of the treasurer, finance committee, and chairmen of the various exhibits were all published in the July issue of "Historic Nantucket," the Association's quarterly magazine, it was voted to dispense with the reading of these reports and to accept them as presented.

Mrs. Adams then presented to the meeting her report as president. In the course of her remarks she mentioned especially Mrs. Alma Backus, who is now in her twenty-fifth year as receptionist at the Fair Street Museum. Mrs. Backus has, during these many years, served the Association loyally and cheerfully and is in no small way responsible for the interest shown in the exhibits by the many visitors to the Museum each year.

She also spoke of the loss to the Association by the death of Wallace N. Long, who contributed so much to the Whaling Museum, and also of the good fortune the Association had had in securing Archibald Cartwright as his successor in the position of custodian.

There is now a total of 1,063 members in the Nantucket Historical Association. Of these 143 are life members, 63 sustaining members, and 857 annual members.

In discussing the activities carried on during both the summer and the winter months by the Council and also by her in attending meetings of other historical societies on the mainland, Mrs. Adams spoke briefly of her participation in the gala world premiere of the movie "Moby Dick" in New Bedford in June. She, as well as others, was disappointed that Nantucket did not receive due credit as the port from which the "Pequod" sailed on Ahab's memorable trip.

On Monday the work began of removing the corner at the intersection of Broad and beach Streets, as the result of the vote of the Association earlier in the season to grant an easement to the Town in order to relieve the traffic at the congested corner. In mentioning this, Mrs. Adams stated that the workmen in digging at the corner had found ashes and other residue which it is believed are the remains of the disastrous fire of 1846 which destroyed the business district of the town.

In conclusion, Mrs. Adams announced that she had made the decision to retire from her duties as president of the Association and as custodian of collections for personal reasons and with the deepest regret.

She was given hearty applause at the conclusion of her report.

Following her report as president, Mr. W. Ripley Nelson arose to present to Mrs. Adams, in behalf of the Board of Selectmen, the certified copy of the law passed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts instituting the Historic Districts Commission and the quill pen used by Governor Christian A. Herter in signing the bill creating the Commission. Both the certified copy and the quill pen will be put in the Fair Street Museum.

The chairman of the nominating committee, Mrs. Rozelle C. Jones, was called upon to present the report of the committee, which was accepted by the meeting and voted upon, the secretary being authorized to cast one ballot for the election of the following officers:

President, George W. Jones; Vice-Presidents, Howard U. Chase, Everett U. Crosby, Burnham N. Dell, Miss Grace Brown Gardner, Stokeley W. Morgan, and W. Ripley Nelson; Secretary-Treasurer Miss Ethel Anderson; Auditor, Ormonde F. Ingall; Councillor until 1958, Robert Caldwell; Councillors until 1960, Mrs. William L. Mather and Mrs. William Perkins.

Mrs. Adams then stated that in the thirty years she had been connected with the Association, and especially the three years as president, she had learned to know and love the collections housed in the various buildings and felt that she could almost call them by name. In retiring from active work with the Association, she said she would never lose interest therein and would always be at hand to help in any way she could. She then called upon Mr. Jones to step forward to receive the gavel as the new president of the Association and said that she didn't know of anyone she would rather see as president—an island-born Nantucketer who had married another island-born Nantucketer.

Before Mr. Jones could do more than say "Thank you", Mr. Nelson requested the floor and told of his years of close association with Mrs. Adams in the work of the Nantucket Historical Association and asked that the meeting give her a rising vote of thanks. This was promptly done, following which Mr. Jones laughingly said that Mr. Nelson had "stolen his thunder." He went on to say that friends are desirable things to have, but that they can also get one into a "pack of trouble" and it seemed to



Snap Shop Photo

MRS. WALTON H. ADAMS

him that that was what had now happened to him. He stated, in a more serious vein, that he, too, wished to congratulate Mrs. Adams for her years of work so ably performed and extended to her an invitation to attend the meeting of the Council to be held at four o'clock Friday afternoon at the Friends Meeting House.

Mr. Jones then introduced the speaker of the afternoon—Mr. Edouard A. Stackpole, former president of the Association, a Nantucketer, former assistant editor of The Inquirer and Mirror, and now curator of Mystic Seaport in Mystic, Conn.

Mr. Stackpole's informal talk to the gathering was intitled "The Challenge of Our Island Heritage" and was given in his own inimitable manner for which he has long been noted here on Nantucket. Mr. Stackpole's speech will be found on page 5 of this issue and we call the attention of our readers to it because of its content and the sincerity in which it was written and presented at the meeting.

President Jones adjourned the meeting shortly after four o'clock, after which those attending had an opportunity to talk with, and congratulate three presidents of the Association—Mr. Stackpole, Mrs. Adams, and the new president, Mr. Jones.

July 21, 1956

## Woman Ends Presidency Of Nantucket Association

NANTUCKET, July 19—Mrs. Walton H. Adams announced at the 62d annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association Tuesday in the Unitarian Church she had decided to retire as association president this year.

She explained that she had passed the generally recognized business retirement age and planned to spend Winters in Florida with relatives. She added she wants to finish a book started some years ago on her Nantucket forefathers, well-known in the whaling industry, and plans to work on genealogy and to paint.

Mrs. Adams joined the association in 1925. She became curator and librarian in 1928 after serving as assistant curator and librarian for three years. In 1942 she was elected vice-president. In 1952 she was appointed chairman of the Historical Museum and Friends Meetinghouse and custodian of collections.

The first woman president of the association, Mrs. Adams was elected in 1953.

Granddaughter of Charles Grant, one of Nantucket's most successful whaling captains and daughter of George A. Grant, also a whaler, she was born in the South Pacific while her parents were on a whaling voyage. She is a direct descendant of early Nantucket settlers.

### Headed DAR

Mrs. Adams served as regent of the Abiah Folger Franklin (mother of Benjamin Franklin) Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution; trustee of Nantucket Athenaeum Library; vice-president and member of the executive committee of the Nantucket Civic League; president of the Nantucket Relief Association; member of the executive committee of the Nantucket Chapter of the American Red Cross; member of the Republican Town Committee; director-at-large of the Bay State Historical League and the only woman member of the Nantucket Finance Committee.

The Council expressed deep regret at the retirement of Mrs. Adams and wished her happiness and success in her retirement.

Guest speaker at the meeting was Edouard Stackpole, curator of the Marine Museum at Mystic, Conn., and former curator of the Nantucket Whaling Museum.

Mrs. Adams noted in her annual report that membership totaled 1,063, including 143 life members, 63 sustaining members and 857 active annual members. She also noted alterations and repairs to the Whaling Museum had been completed, but the

\$20,000 for the job had not been entirely subscribed.

Mr. Stackpole, a native of Nantucket who has written many books about the island, spoke on "The Challenge of an Island Heritage." He said the island heritage and tradition was unique in that it was bequeathed by a generation of seafarers who made Nantucket's name known all over the world. Traditions began to develop here when families divided into political groups, he said. Also contributors to Nantucket's tradition were the merchants and shopkeepers and the whaling ship owners and captains, he said.

### Legislation Praised

Mr. Stackpole lauded the Historic Districts Commission bill passed this year by the Legislature in an effort to retain the flavor of Nantucket. It was the first bill of its type passed by the Legislature. Following Nantucket's lead the Beacon Hill area of Boston secured similar legislation. Mr. Stackpole urged the Historical Association to obtain the support of the public in keeping Nantucket alive historically.

Officers elected for 1956-57 were George W. Jones, president; Howard U. Chase, Everett U. Crosby, Burnham N. Dell, Miss Grace Brown Gardner, Stokeley W. Morgan and W. Ripley Nelson, vice-presidents; Miss Ethel Anderson, secretary and treasurer, and Ormonde E. Ingall, auditor.

Name of councillor to serve until 1958 was Robert C. Caldwell. Councillors to serve until 1960 are Mrs. William L. Mather and Mrs. William Perkins. Nominating committee members were Rozelle C. Jones, Robert D. Congdon and Alcon Chadwick.

N. B. Standard  
July 19, 1956



## Jones Elected Association President; Stackpole Addresses Historical Group

George W. Jones was elected president of the Nantucket Historical Association at its 62nd annual meeting Tuesday afternoon in the Unitarian Church. He succeeded Mrs. Nancy H. Adams, a member of the Association for 31 years.

Speaker at the meeting and annual election of officers was Edouard A. Stackpole, curator of the Mystic Museum in Mystic, Conn., author of several Nantucket historical books and former Island newspaperman. Mr. Stackpole, addressing approximately 100 Association members and visitors, spoke on The Challenge of an Island Heritage.

Stokeley W. Morgan was elected vice-president. Reelected vice-presidents were: Howard U. Chase, Everett U. Crosby, Burnham N. Dell, Miss Grace Brown Gardner and W. Ripley Nelson. Also reelected were Miss Ethel Anderson, secretary and treasurer and Ormonde F. Ingall, auditor. Councilors elected were Robert C. Caldwell, to serve until 1958, and Mrs. William L. Mather and Mrs. William Perkins, to serve until 1960. Members of the nominating committee were Rozelle C. Jones, Robert D. Congdon and Alcon Chadwick.

Because the Historic Districts Bill was passed by the State Legislature during her term of office, President Jones presented to Mrs. Adams a certified copy of the measure and the pen with which Gov. Herter signed it into law.

In his talk Mr. Stackpole likened Nantucket to one of the few spots remaining in the world today that still possesses a quality to refresh; a place where the individual may still recapture an illusion of the past. He attributed

to Nantucket a tradition unusual in American heritage because it was one left by "sea kings" who made the Island's name known to the four corners of the world.

The tradition that belongs to Islanders now, he told the gathering, is not bound by quaint houses and winding streets; it is much greater than that, he said. It is, he continued, a human tradition and not a material one.

Touching on heritage, Mr. Stackpole said, there are people living here now who are actually closer to the town's past than any like group in the nation today. The several parts of this heritage, he said, were determination, self reliance and ability on one side and religious faith, devotion to duty and love of home on the other.

He theorized for a moment on the possibility of disaster like a fire striking Nantucket. In asking rhetorically whether the community would be the same after reconstruction, he answered it would not to those who had spent their lives here, "but perhaps another generation would not comprehend the wide difference or realize

what had been lost." In fact, he ventured, another 100 years might create the illusion of old age all over again. In reality then, he noted, it would only be the historian who would understand what had actually been lost through rebuilding.

Mr. Stackpole admitted that he didn't believe any disaster could destroy the Island's true heritage or, as he described it, that "potent force which created the old town in the first place."

He told his audience that early Islanders built something stronger than warehouses and homes, they built principles which guided their lives. These principles have remained, he recalled, though the empire early Islanders created has vanished.

Tradition, he noted, is "the tested, tried out opinions, statements and beliefs which have been handed down from generation to generation by oral transmission . . ."

Nantucket tradition, he said, is a thing of three parts: whaling, Quakerism and family trees. Tradition, he added, is not an exact science which may be proved by some kind of mathematical formula, but is more "like the devotion of a mother for her child, unfathomable and unlimited . . ."

Harking back to the first years here, Mr. Stackpole said that era was marked by the alignment of family groups into political camps. He asked: "Can we forget Mary Coffin and think only of her father, Tristram? Can we neglect Richard Pinkham and concentrate on John Gardner? Can we overlook Richard Swain and devote all our attention to Peter Folger? We cannot. They were equally the parents of the first generation of whalers and their initial struggles were as nothing as to their sons!"

In discounting the idea that Islanders are somehow all related to the whaling masters of the past, Mr. Stackpole asserted that the tradition of the Island was also built by common sailors, clerks and merchants with each playing an integral part with the great and small here all having their share of triumphs, defeats, successes and failures.

Mr. Stackpole warned that in the light of events today even Nantucket must accept change and adapt change to Island traditions in a realistic manner. He considered the passage of the Historic Districts Bill a step in the right direction.

In closing and with reference to the Act, he said: "But with the functioning of the Historic Districts Committee we cannot sit back and become complacent. By doing so we would look only inward and survey . . . a walled town. We cannot turn our backs to what is going on behind us on the other side of the wall."

In fact or fiction, Mr. Stackpole likes to keep the record straight. Hardly had John Huston's *Moby Dick* flashed across the screen in New Bedford several weeks ago at its world premiere than the author and authority on Nantucket life became first suspicious and then certain. The whaling ship *Pequod* of Melville's epic was sailing from New Bedford and not Nantucket as the author originally wrote!

Criticizing this tinkering with the original plot, Mr. Stackpole compared the switch with a problem in mathematics: "Taking a wrong premise it was impossible

for any producer to reach the right answer. Melville had selected Nantucket as the *Pequod*'s home-port for a basic reason and the whole significance of that was entirely lost."

Mr. Stackpole termed Melville's work a "document of praise for Nantucket." And, he noted caustically, the name of the Island was not mentioned a single time throughout the entire film. What of Starbuck, he asks, the mate on the most famous of all fictional whaling vessels? The net effect of the picture, he declared, was somewhat like dramatizing Greek history without mention of Athens or Socrates.

Summing the picture up—and it was a terse and to the point summation—he declared: "Give the Hollywood boys time and they will again film *The Ten Commandments* and decide to use only five because the picture should run only two hours and a half."

He warned that the Island waterfront should not be "relegated to the mill stones of progress." Public support, he said, and understanding of the issues involved are the best guide for preserving Island tradition and heritage.

In her final report to the Association outgoing president Mrs. Adams noted that membership over the past year has remained steady with 143 life members, 63 sustaining members and 857 active members for a total overall membership of 1,063. Also, she recalled that Mrs. William Perkins was appointed chairman of the Oldest House; Mrs. John Bartlett Jr., chairman of the 1800 House, and Archie Cartwright, custodian of the Whaling Museum.

Mrs. Adams also cited Mrs. Alma Backus who is now in her 25th year as receptionist at the Fair Street Museum and Mrs. Ellen D. Chace now librarian at the Whaling Museum. She reported that the full \$20,000 for repairs at the Museum has not been raised. She expressed her appreciation to Mr. Nelson, chairman of the finance committee and committee members for their work on the project.

A drop in admissions for the last two seasons to the seven historic buildings was attributed to hurricane scares that occurred in August of both years. According to the Association annual report, total admissions for 1955-56 to date are 30,364, already ahead of last season when the final total was 30,102.

According to the treasurer's report for the year ending May 31, 1956 income amounted to \$16,734.93 with expenses of \$14,678. Net income was \$2,056.93.

The new Association president, Mr. Jones, in accepting his new post, pledged to serve the organization to the best of his ability, saying he had a deep interest in the aims and welfare of the organization.

### "Moby Dick" Premiere In New Bedford.

The world premiere of the movie "Moby Dick", based on Herman Melville's famous story of Captain Ahab and the White Whale, was held in New Bedford Wednesday evening. The premiere was the climax of a three-day celebration, during which Director John Huston, Gregory Peck, who played the part of Captain Ahab, and Count Friedrich Ledebur, who had the role of Queequeg, were winned, dined, and feted at dinners, clambakes, and parades.

Mrs. Walton H. Adams, president of the Nantucket Historical Association, was a member of the Honorary Committee for the three-day celebration and was a guest of Warner Brothers at the premiere. Among others attending as guests were Mr. Edouard A. Stackpole, curator of the Mystic Marine Historical Association, and his son Renny.



## The Challenge Of an Island Heritage.

By Edouard A. Stackpole.

*As presented at the annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association on Tuesday, July 17.*

A legend of the Greeks tells of a wanderer who arrived, weary and aged, at the world's end and stopped to quench his thirst at a clear spring. After one draught of the enchanted water he realized that this was the same spring that had refreshed him in his youth.

In our uneasy American world today there are only a few spots which are imbued with this peculiar quality to refresh — and Nantucket is one of these favored places. They recapture that illusion of past — they wreak a magic in one's memory.

Other seaport towns may compete with Nantucket in beauty. You may find beaches for swimming in a dozen other summer resorts; you may enjoy sailing to better advantage at numerous stretches along the New England coast; you may discover equally well-appointed hotels and rooming houses at other places. But what sets Nantucket apart is something you cannot find in these other places. It is that awareness that in this island-town we are in the presence of a compelling tradition — a tradition unique in the annals of America — a heritage bequeathed by a generation of sea kings the like of which the nation will never see again — mariners who made the name Nantucket known all over the world.

As we wander through the streets and lanes of this historic town we are close to the physical evidences of this past, immersing ourselves simultaneously in today and yesterday. Here we are reminded of the courage, persistence, daring, and self-reliance of that breed of Quaker seamen who evolved a unique kingdom in the sea.

Writers have extolled the quality of Nantucket's peculiar architectural perfection. Artists capture the many appealing vistas of town and harbor. Talented orators have praised the story of the island's past, and the journalists find a variety of material supplying their pens and their journals.

And now, only in recent months, with an inspiring rush of good fortune, the Historic Districts Bill has provided the implementation for a legal protection of the architectural inheritance of the old town.

But tradition so bequeathed to us as islanders is not alone confined to the sturdy houses and winding lanes which make up the so-called "historic districts" of our island. Our heritage is far greater than ancient wood and brick, and locale; it is a human symbol, not a material one.

Suppose a disaster (heaven forbid!) should destroy to a large degree our old town? Suppose a great campaign enabled us to rebuild and reconstruct. Would it be the same? Of course, it could not be so to us, but perhaps another generation would not comprehend the wide difference or realize what had been lost. In fact, another hundred years hence might add the illusion of great age, so that only the historian and the archaeologist would comprehend that the irreplaceable was gone forever.

On the other hand, no disaster can ever destroy the true heritage of Nantucket—that potent force which created the old town in the first place. Those Nantucketers of the 17th,

18th, and early 19th centuries gave of their minds and hearts as well as of their hands. They built something stronger than dwellings and warehouses; they stood squarely and confidently on definite principles whether within their homes or counting houses or on the decks of their ships. Though their empire has vanished, their legacy remains, for it is woven into the history, economy, and geography of the nation.

### What Is This Heritage?

History is to a nation what memory is to an individual. In this island town we have a people who are actually living closer to the community's past than any other similar group in America. If we pause to reflect amid these visible evidences of our heritage we are aware of the deeper significance of our relationship with the past. It is like a psychological cocktail.

What is this heritage — this Nantucket tradition? As much as I would like to present the romantic I am afraid that the basic parts are more fixed and less emotional. The several elements are composed of determination, self-reliance and ability on the one hand, and religious faith, devotion to duty, and love of home on the other. These are the component parts of the inheritance bequeathed us by our forefathers.

Tradition is not a documented history. Yet, on the other hand, it is not true that much of written history is merely apparent illogical deductions of what writers may have believed were the facts? Tradition is the tested, tried-out opinions, statements, and beliefs which have been handed down from generation to generation by oral transmission, the knowledge of which is communicated in most cases within written memorials.

It was Hawthorne who said: "Nobody can make a tradition; it takes a century to make it." I may add it takes a living generation to continue to transmit it.

Our Nantucket tradition is unalterably a blending of whaling, Quakerism, and family trees. Such an incongruous mixture was placed in the try-pots of this island, during two centuries and a half of life, and the product, fused by fire of action and cleansed by love and despair, is like the white, crystalline spermaceti wax which made Nantucket famous — a pure substance unlike any other.

Tradition and history are so closely allied that one cannot live without the aid of the other. We cannot handle them as we might the exact sciences, like mathematics or chemistry. There is no series of figures in tradition which we may check for accuracy or hold up as a proven sum. Tradition is like the devotion of a mother for her child, unfathomable and unlimited, and impossible to fully describe.

We who are privileged to live in Nantucket know that this island tradition is as strong as the tide and like the tide always returns. To analyze it would take a longer time than is available this afternoon and so I must give you merely what I feel are the highlights.

### Old Ghosts and New Spirits

I once read an article on Nantucket in which the islanders were described as descendants of whaling masters. Somehow, I wish the writer could have met Charlie Brown Cathcart, or Joe Fisher, or Peter Hoyer — or some of the other ordinary sailor men that I knew as a child — and made the statement to them. I know what they would have said, but I can't repeat it here. What a ship-master might have remarked, I will never know as they were then all gone, but I do know they would have laughed heartily.

Yes, whaling is so strongly the mainstay of our tradition that no part of the one is without the other. But there were ordinary sailors as well as captains, coopers, and blacksmiths; as well as ship owners, clerks and longshoremen, as well as storekeepers, and there were mothers and sisters as well as fathers and brothers.

To find a way to trace the very origins of our tradition is to thread one's way back through the labyrinth of history. The ghosts of our ancestors—who linger in the shadows of the old houses, whose shapes suddenly appear in foggy patches in the lanes, whose voices are often heard in the surging of the surf, and the howling of the wind—would not like to be considered prim and proper heroines and heroes. They were living people

with the usual allotment of triumphs and defeats, success and failures. When they came as the first white settlers of this island, well out to sea, they never realized they were founders of a unique and lasting settlement which was to become a virtual kingdom in the sea.

The story of their first years, featured by the subsequent alignment of the family groups into divided political camps, set up the beginnings of the tradition. Can we forget Mary Coffin and think only of her father Tristram? Can we neglect Richard Pinkham and concentrate on John Gardner? Can we overlook Richard Swain and devote all our attention to Peter Folger? We cannot. They were equally the parents of the first generation of whalers and their initial struggles were as nothing as to their sons! It was the creation of the second generation which gave the delineation of the character of those ancestors of ours.

I could give you the full story of the whaling eras but that is not to be today. I have written it in "The Sea Hunters". But I must say we can do no better than cherish the whaling tradition as it is so much a part of our nation's past as well as Nantucket's. It brought wealth at a time when both country and island home needed it.

But before I leave it, let me remind you of the great contrasts in whaling: The necessity of the business — The excitement of the chase — The utter boredom of the cruises — The courage of officers and men — The unfeeling brutality of the treatment —

The avarice of some owners and fairness of others — The rewards for service well done — Spectacular success — Dismal failure.

Captain Nicholson buried his child on one Pacific Island and saw his wife ashore at another, to return and find her dead. Lieut. Reuben Chase became a privateersman after he had been forced to become a spectator at the great sea battle of the "Bon Homme Richard" and "Serapis"; then adopted a packet captain's role before returning to invest in an island grocery.

What about those who went away—I could tell you of Richard Pinkham, a prisoner of war at Halifax; Obed Hussey, the whaler blacksmith whose invention of that vital part made the reaper possible.

(Here Mr. Stackpole spoke of many other Nantucketers who made outstanding careers for themselves, both "on" and "off" island.—Ed.)

### There Is a Tide

A few weeks ago I sat in a crowded theatre in New Bedford participating in the audience's share of the world premiere of the new motion picture "Moby Dick". Within a few minutes a deep suspicion became fact — the "Pequod" of this modern version of "Moby Dick" was sailing not from Nantucket but from New Bedford. The director had given the old ship a different home port.

It was like a problem in mathematics. Taking a wrong premise it was impossible for any producer to reach the right answer. Melville had selected Nantucket as the "Pequod's" home port for a basic reason and the whole significance of that was entirely lost.

If ever there was a written document of praise for Nantucket it is "Moby Dick", and yet, incredible as it was, the name "Nantucket" was not once mentioned in the entire picture. What of Starbuck — what of Ahab himself? How could such a staggering mistake occur? And yet, such a decision was made. Can we think of a

dramatization of Greek history without mentioning Athens or Socrates? Can we visualize a picture of Trafalgar without the Victory or Nelson? Give the Hollywood boys time and they will again film the "Ten Commandments" and decide to use only five because the picture should only run two hours and a half.

If a natural claim to fame, so firmly established in an American classic, can be ignored by the experts, think of how quickly the lesser lights can despoil an island heritage!

If we learn nothing else from history we are struck by the fact of its essential continuity. The character which is the old town of Nantucket is founded in its simplicity and in its mellowness of age, and hovering over that heritage of the past.

Nantucket cannot remain static. A community which resists change is an insecure community. There are, after all, only two courses: First, to accept change and to adapt it to Nantucket traditions in a realistic and appropriate manner; secondly, to let things drift along, avoiding the obvious and be suddenly overwhelmed with it. By the first course we may evolve the adaptation through the democratic processes of law, by the second, we invite disaster.

The passage of the "Historic Districts" bill was a major step.

But, with the functioning of the Historic Districts Committee, we cannot sit back and become complacent. By so doing we would look only inward and survey, as it were, a walled town. We cannot turn our backs to what is going on behind us on the other side of the wall. Nantucket's waterfront is too much a part of its history to be relegated to the millstones of so-called progress. These wharves and streets have survived storms, fires, and depression but they cannot cope with that tyrant called "progress". The town once turned its back on an opportunity to preserve one major portion. I hope this will never happen again. There is no substitute for public support. Let the average person know and then appeal to him for help. The true economy of Nantucket is not a matter of new steamboats or new airplanes, neither is it a question of new ramps for old wharves — it is the faith of Nantucketers in Nantucket and the willingness of islanders to invest in that kind of future we earnestly believe is best for this island town.

It is one thing to protect the outward while letting the inner force disintegrate. We can do no better than paraphrase a classic utterance — We cannot consecrate or dedicate Nantucket. The brave men and women who gave it to us as a heritage have consecrated it far beyond our power to add or detract. Once we lose the full significance of this heritage we also lose the value of preserving the physical evidences. But I know that we will not lose it so long as we mind the admonition of a devoted American:

"... that in this place there has been collected the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institution under which we now live."

As the repository of the outward manifestation of this rugged simplicity of our great heritage we have the old town of Nantucket, which glows with the reflection of an "inner light".

As the guardians of that "inner light", which contains the hopes and fears, the triumphs and defeats, the successes and the depressions, of our great heritage we have only ourselves. My friends, let us accept that challenge!

July 21, 1956

Stackpole



### Milford Haven, Wales, Citizen Opens Informal Talks.

On July 3, Mr. Arthur H. Jackson, the Deputy Clerk of the Urban District Council of the Township of Milford Haven, Wales, gave the first of this summer's informal talks sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association. He brought with him as gifts from the Town of Milford Haven a scroll with the seal of the Township conveying cordial greetings to the Town of Nantucket from Milford Haven, and a genealogical table of the Nantucketers who went to Milford Haven to establish a whaling industry there. The table contains very complete family records over many generations, and will be made available by the Historical Association to persons interested in examining it. He also made a gift of a Welsh Love Spoon.

These spoons, elaborately carved from maple, are rarely produced today. They were formerly sent by young men to the ladies of their choice and constituted an avowal of more than passing interest. If the gift was accepted, the young man was thus openly acknowledged as a suitor; if it was returned, the implication was obvious. However, the gift and its acceptance did not imply an engagement, only a willingness to consider a proposal. It seems possible that the current verb to "spoon" traces its origin to this custom. The gifts were accepted by President Nancy Adams on behalf of the Historical Association.

In conclusion Mr. Jackson showed on slides a number of interesting pictures of Milford Haven taken by Miss Margaret Harwood on a recent visit, with his comments and explanations.

The next talk, on July 10, will be by Dr. William E. Gardner, who is the author of a number of books on Nantucket.

July 7, 1956

### B.B.C. Sent Nantucket Greetings From Milford Haven, Wales.

A description of the founding of the town of Milford Haven, Wales, was broadcast over the British Broadcasting Company Overseas Service this week, and was received here quite satisfactorily. The program, entitled "The Welsh Magazine" was broadcast on Wednesday and again on Thursday over the B.B.C. short wave radio network.

The speaker was Mr. Arthur H. Jackson, Deputy Clerk of the Urban District Council of the Township of Milford Haven, who with his wife paid a visit to Nantucket last summer. His description of the founding of the town by Nantucket Quakers, his visit to our island, and the return visit to Milford Haven by Mr. and Mrs. George W. Jones was broadcast substantially as follows:

Although there are a number of places in the British Isles which can claim to have some connection with the United States of America, few towns, if any, can claim the same distinction as the Town of Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire. It was to these shores in 1793 that from the Island of Nantucket off the Massachusetts coast there came a colony of Quaker whalers, some 25 families in all, to settle the town

and carry on the South Sea whaling. London was the chief market for their spermaceti whale oil, where it was used for the street lighting and these Quakers had been trying for some time to find a new center for their whaling activities.

One of the leading merchants came to Britain to discuss terms with representatives of the government and to make a survey of possible ports, but in view of the many difficulties and delays which were encountered, he contacted the French government and as a result the business was established at Dunkirk. Others of them left Nantucket and set up the industry at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, but they did not find this entirely satisfactory.

When the opportunity came to transfer to Milford Haven, however, no time was lost and the whaling industry was established. These intrepid people came to Milford Haven at the invitation of Charles Francis Greville, nephew of Sir William Hamilton, and with the backing of the British government. Sir William Hamilton had obtained an act of Parliament in 1790 which enabled him, his heirs and assigns, to make and provide quays, piers, docks, and other erections, and to establish a market with proper roads and avenues thereto respectively.

The Quakers built a church, hotel, a brewery, freight house, and dwelling houses and appellate evidence is available of their presence here, in the various buildings, such as Priory Lodge, the home of Samuel Starbuck, one of the leaders of the Quaker settlers. There can also be seen just below Hamilton Terrace the arched roofs of the vaults which run under the road and which were formerly used as stores for the whale oil. There is also a Quaker meeting house which was built by the first settlers, most of whom now lie at rest in its graveyard.

Unfortunately, none of the original names seem to have been preserved, except perhaps that of Rotch, the spelling of which has been reduced to Roch. The Starbucks and the Folgers, who were prominent among the settlers, seem to have died out, but the memory of some of them and of their island home of Nantucket is perpetuated in the town by such names as Starbuck Road, Dartmouth Street, and Nantucket Avenue.

A few years ago, Mrs. Rozelle Coleman Jones, a direct descendant of Abiel Coleman, the wife of Timothy Folger, one of the first settlers, found in the attic of her home overlooking the beautiful harbor of Nantucket, a diary written by her ancestor, covering the period from 1805 to 1811 when she was in Milford Haven.

In July last year my wife and I were privileged to visit the Island of Nantucket where we stayed for five wonderful days with Miss Margaret Harwood, the 71 year old astronomer in charge of the Maria Mitchell Observatory. We had the pleasure of conveying to the Nantucket Historical Association greetings from the Town of Milford Haven bearing the township seal, a carved Welsh love spoon also bearing the crest of the council, and a copy of the genealogical table of the original Nantucket settlers which runs from 1615 to 1821.

Later in the year my wife and I were privileged to receive into our home Mrs. Rozelle Coleman Jones and her husband, Mr. George Jones, who shortly after our visit to Nantucket was elected president of the Historical Association.

To Mr. and Mrs. George Jones, Miss Margaret Harwood, Dr. and Mrs. Burnham N. Dell, Miss Marjorie Weirich, Mrs. Nancy Adams, the Rev. William E. Gardner, Mrs. Ralston, Mr. and Mrs. Leeds Mitchell, and the host of other wonderful friends we made during our stay, I would extend warmest greetings from my wife and myself, and express the hope that the bond between the two towns may be strengthened and perpetuated by increasing numbers of exchange visits.

### British Version of Founding of Milford Haven, Wales, by Nantucketers Explained by London Times Article

#### Friends Found an Oil Port

##### The Romantic History of a Pembrokeshire Haven

"Tell me how Wales was made so happy as to inherit such a haven," said Shakespeare, speaking of Milford long ago; and the haven, though no more a placid creek with villages along its banks, is still beautiful and peaceful. It is, indeed, one of those ancient places which, owing to some allusion in poem, history, or fiction, though small and insignificant in space or time, are securely fixed in the country of the spirit.

Built of prosaic brick, the town faces a magnificent expanse of blue water, its streets a little tame and drab, but its sea-promenade a fine stretch of road where the stranger may walk either to the ancient inn (which Nelson visited) or else may visit the lighthouse and hear a very ancient and historic tale. For it was near the lighthouse that Henry, Earl of Richmond, the first of England's Tudor Kings, returning from exile in Brittany, landed to claim the crown.

Milford was a tiny village in those days. The town was really founded in the year 1793 by enterprising Quaker fishermen from Nantucket Island. Men who spent their years chasing the whale or taming the uncultivated earth of their island home.

Thinking of them the stranger visiting Milford may walk up the town to see the old Meeting House which still stands back in a quiet street. It is a simple, well-lit room, furnished with an oak rostrum and a few narrow benches. Trees wave outside the windows, for there is a high-walled, leafy yard where you may see, half buried in grass, headstones bearing the initials of Grandmother Abigail Starbuck and her husband Samuel, as well as many others—Folgers, Colemans, Mayhews, whose names still linger.

#### East Anglian Origin

Their story is an heroic one. Edward Starbuck, a leading Friend in East Anglia, tired of persecution, had set sail with his family from this country in an open boat in 1651, hoping to find liberty of conscience in the New World. They landed in New

England, settled, and were joined by other Friends. Becoming whale-fishers, they prospered greatly and built themselves a town. But later their unorthodox views about baptism made them once more a target for persecution and they were compelled to move.

So they sailed off again and came to Nantucket Island. Here they landed, made friends with the Indian Chief Saskan, purchased part of the island, and, having built a second town, busied themselves with trades and agriculture as well as whale hunting. Soon they were exporting their whale oil to light the lamps in London streets.

Nearly a hundred years passed peaceably. Then came the rude alarm of war and the revolt of the American colonists. Nantucket remained neutral, but the whaling ships could not sail to Britain and the little community, which was loyal to the old country, saw itself pillaged and plundered on every side.

After petitioning the authorities of both parties for protection and finding none, they resolved to move once more. And this time they chose Nova Scotia, still under British rule, as their refuge. But all was to no purpose. Enemies of various kinds attacked them and the little town they had built was soon in dire distress, for their oil was no contraband of war and could not be sent to their agents in London, nor could their schooners venture out to sea.

So this small body of Quakers, unable either to remain in Nova Scotia or return to Nantucket, and with thousands of gallons of oil on their hands, held a solemn meeting. There they decided to send a deputy to the Old Country. He was Samuel Starbuck, great-grandson of the pioneer. How or why we do not know, but this young man met Charles Francis Greville, nephew of Sir William Hamilton.

Greville had a dream project. Visiting his uncle's estates, which lay along the edge of the sea in Pembrokeshire, he had been struck by the idea of converting the quiet creeks at the adjoining villages of Milford and Nangle (where the lighthouse now stands) into a great harbor for deep-water vessels: in fact, of turning the

over  
Milford Haven



little fishing villages into a naval base. His uncle had mentioned the matter to members of the Government and all concerned were agreeable.

#### Valiant Whalers

One problem remained—who should do the work? And then someone brought him news of the valiant Nantucket whalers whose envoy was in town and whose skill and workmanship had brought them renown in the late American colony. He invited Samuel to “take a bit of mutton” with him at his house on the north side of Paddington Green.

Samuel accepted the invitation and, before the meal was over, had agreed to return at once to Nova Scotia and offer the community of Friends sheltering there the work of building a port which might become the center for their business as whale fishers. All expenses were to be borne by the British Government, which was soon warmly interested.

The whalers accepted the offer and, having made a few wise provisos, set sail. The men, to the number of 182, came in their 13 schooners, while the women and children were brought over in British vessels. They arrived at Milford in the autumn of 1793 and were housed in neighboring mansions.

Greville, in the meanwhile, had arranged with Sir William Hamilton and others to have artisans ready and bricks, timber, and stone upon the spot so that building could begin forthwith. Quays were the first thing constructed, then an inn, then docks, and, lastly, houses and a meeting house.

#### New York Pattern

Having good craftsmen among them and experience in building (this was their fourth town) they soon set up workshops and began the present Milford Haven, which was planned after the pattern of New Amsterdam, now New York. You may see the nucleus of the idea to this day in the three straight streets running parallel to the waterfront, joined by three short streets at right angles. It was not a good plan for the site on the cliff, because the short streets had to climb up at gradients which daunt even a modern motor car. The long streets have now changed their names, but were originally called Front, Middle, and Back Street.

Greville remained a staunch Friend, jeopardizing his own fortune for the advancement of the scheme. His reputation in after days was dubious but his letters to the Quakers show how far more attractive a character he was than has been supposed. He reaped no personal benefit from his disinterested efforts, but had the happiness of seeing the town grow and thrive. The community went on whaling for another 50 years because, as one of them said, it brought “a vast quantity of coin drawn from the bottom of the great deep.”

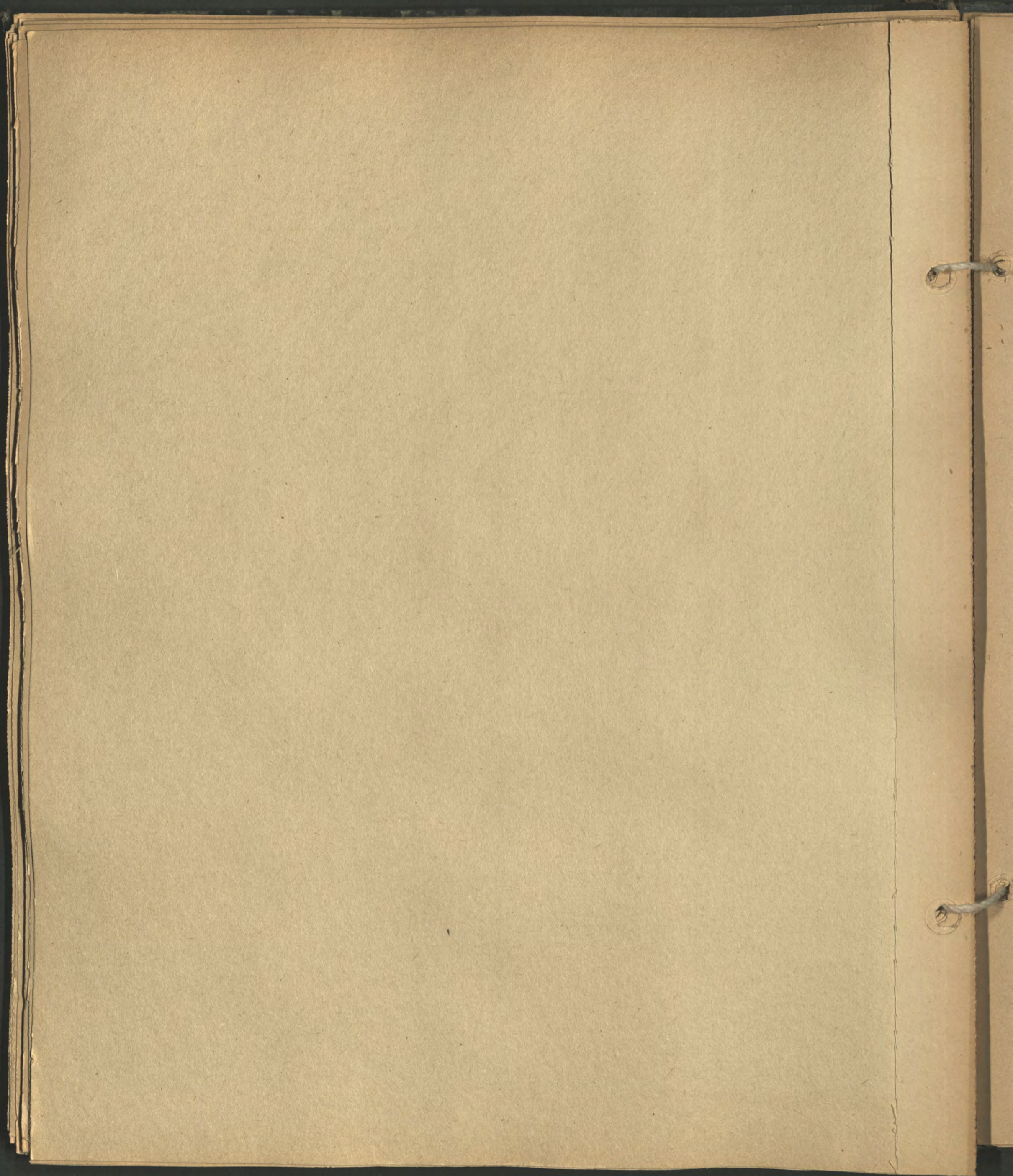
Milford Haven is a much larger place today and it appears likely that in days to come tall derricks, tankers, and pipe-lines will appear upon its edges. Filled, this time, with oil taken from the depths of the earth and just as eagerly welcomed.

(The above article is taken in its entirety from the Jan. 25, 1957, edition of The London Times.—Ed.)

July 10, 1957

Milford Haven







### 300th Anniversary Celebration Suggested by Dr. Gardner.

A possible 300th anniversary on Nantucket, July 2, 1959, was considered by Dr. Will Gardner in an informal talk Tuesday afternoon at the Friends Meeting House. It was the second in a summer weekly series presented by the Historical Association.

Mrs. Nancy Adams, President of the Association, introduced Dr. Gardner and, after commending his writing of books on Nantucket families, the Starbucks, Coffins, and Folgers, announced his subject: "A Ramble in 1659 and Nantucket Bought for Thirty Pounds and Two Beaver Hats".

"The second day of July, 1959, three years from this month, might become a very great day for this Island", said the speaker, "for on that day 300 years ago our Island was bought by Tristram Coffin, Thomas Macy, Edward Starbuck, and seven others acting as a company and its settlement began."

The speaker explained that the title "A Ramble in 1659" was chosen because dry dates and documents would be avoided and visits to some old houses and locations would humanize the first settlers and help discover why they left pleasant Merrimac Valley and came to an unfertile island surrounded by treacherous shoals, to make a new start in life.

The first visit was to the Thomas Macy house in Amesbury. Built possibly in the 1640's by Thomas Macy, it may have been here that the purchase of the Island was first considered. Macy and Thomas Mayhew, of Martha's Vineyard, the owner of all the islands of southern New England, were cousins and also members of the Colonial Council; frequent meetings and interchange of visits is reasonable, and as Mayhew had bought the islands to escape from irritating conditions in Watertown, so Macy and others might follow his lead.

In like manner the speaker presented the character and conditions of Starbuck in Dover and Coffin in Newbury and a possibility of a considerable period of time passing as they discussed the circumstances involved.

There are no records of these early years, but in February, 1659, we have records that imply many meetings of the "owners of the Island of Nantucket". These records show there was much discussion, especially on the form of government, the division of land and the possibility of buying the Indians' rights. In these records Peter Folger (grandfather of Benjamin Franklin) the overseer of Thomas Mayhew, emerges as familiar with all details and conditions of the Island, so much so that on the committee to divide the land he was made the most important member and no final action could be taken unless he was present.

It is clear that the actual transfer of the Island waited for evidence that Mayhew could buy land from the Indians. Peter Folger finally brought the news that he could deal with Sachem Nanahuma and Sachem Nickanoose and on June 20 the sale of the Western end of the island was made to Mayhew for 12 pounds and the deed signed by the Indians. Ten days after, all met in Edgartown at Mayhew's house and the transaction was finished.

It is reasonable to think that the "two beaver hats, one for myself and one for my wife" was added as a compliment to Tristram Coffin, for his son was a well-known tailor and his furs widely recognized.

In conclusion Dr. Gardner said: "The Coffins, Macys, Starbucks, and all the men and women who left the Merrimac area, were dynamic people. They sought escape from a community where their liberties were questioned and invaded. They came to our Island for freedom—freedom from interference with their opinions and judgments and ideals, freedom to create and maintain life they believed was the best for them. They took codfish from the surrounding sea and then whale oil from distant seas and turned them into wealth and built a town with many houses and buildings we treasure. The descendants of the three leaders nestled their homes together on Main Street, and there they stand today, unforgettable houses: five Starbucks, eight Coffins, three Macys—all admired by visitors who yearn to enter them."

"What better memorial to our first settlers could we provide than a three hundredth anniversary starting July 2, 1959, the date of the signing of the '30 pounds and two beaver hats' deed."

"All over the United States are Nantucket families who write us about their yearnings to see Nantucket."

"The idea is worth consideration—an anniversary period, at this time of confusion, when we revive the past and live with our ancestors who sought this Island as a refuge."

### Island 'Forty-Niners' Quest For Gold Told

Nantucketers have strayed far afield in their search for wealth, and not the least of the places they sought out were the California Gold Fields in 1849.

Taking this as her topic, Miss Helen Winslow gave the third informal talk sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association in the Friends Meeting House Tuesday afternoon. Miss Winslow told members and visitors that it was not uncommon in those days for whaling men of the Island to circle the globe in the pursuit of whale oil profits, so they'd hardly be phased by a six months voyage around Cape Horn to San Francisco. A few hardy souls even attempted the overland route, she said.

According to records, over 600 men left Nantucket in 1849 for the gold fields. Miss Winslow said that in some instances participants in the journeys formed associations for a joint venture that was guided by elaborate rules for apportioning the work and the gold when it was found. A director, elected by association members, was granted broad powers of management.

### Nantucket's "Forty-Niners" Subject of Historical Talk.

Miss Helen Winslow gave the third informal talk sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association at the Friends Meeting House last Tuesday, an interesting and entertaining description of the hardships and adventures of the Nantucketers who participated in the California gold rush of 1849. The Islanders of that day were accustomed to traveling great distances in search of wealth in the form of whale oil and it was therefore quite in character for them to embark on the six months voyage around Cape Horn to San Francisco.

Over 600 men left Nantucket for the gold fields, mostly by sea although a few went by the overland trails. In some instances a group of these pioneers formed an association for a joint venture with elaborate rules for dividing the work, and gold, when found, and for the election of a director of the company with broad powers of management and discipline.

Miss Winslow read the rules of such a band of gold seekers who sailed from Nantucket on the ship "Henry Astor" in May 1849. She also read from the diary of James M. Bunker who sailed with a similar group on the ship "Aurora" in January of the same year. Over thirty ships sailed from Nantucket for San Francisco and many more sailed from other New England sea ports. The voyages were often stormy, the food bad, the drinking water scarce. Miss Winslow read some entertaining verses composed by a sailor poet graphically describing these hardships.

The talk next Tuesday will be given by Mr. Charles Clark Coffin on the subject of the Nantucket Proprietary, describing the manner in which the early settlers divided the land.

July 27, 1956

July 16, 1956

July 28, 1956

Gardner



## Island Development Of Land Described

Following Charles Clark Coffin's talk Tuesday afternoon to members, friends and guests of the Nantucket Historical Association, one appreciates how true were his opening words: "The Development of Nantucket land has been a very unique and unusual process, as far as I know entirely different from the usual development of real estate anywhere else."

It all began back in 1641, Mr. Coffin, Nantucket town clerk, told the gathering in the Friend's Meeting House, when the Island was deeded to Thomas Meyhew and his son by an agent of the Earl of Sterling. Eighteen years later, the account went, Mayhew sold the Island to the ten original purchasers who were allowed to take in ten partners. These represented the 20 original proprietors and by 1670 their figure stood at 27. In 1792 300 could claim an owner-

ship in the Common Fields.

In answer to a query, Mr. Coffin explained that lots of land had been set aside in town for homes. The lots were privately owned, but other lands were held in common.

The year 1782 saw the first division, or basis of division, of land here. Mr. Coffin explained it this way: "... one share was entitled to keep 720 sheep; 16 sheep were counted equal to one horse, and eight sheep to one ox or cow." Under that system 27 (the original number of Proprietors) and 720 became the basic layout for land shares.

History records, Mr. Coffin said, that Nantucket once a part of New York, became a separate county of Massachusetts in 1695. Curiously enough, he continued the Proprietors of Nantucket kept jurisdiction over the Island Ponds. As a result a legal dispute arose some years back over whether the State Department of Conservation could enforce a regulation requiring fishing licenses here. After the arrest of two men, the case

went to the Department and was reviewed by lawyers. Result: the case was dismissed. It was concluded the ponds still belonged to the Proprietors and that's where jurisdiction lay.

In 1671, he continued, the town was incorporated and houses were literally moved from the town's original site near Capaum Pond to Wesko, the present location.

Apparently the moving of a house presented no real problems in those days. Plumbing was unknown and, of course, there was no wiring, so it was just a matter of pulling out the wooden pegs that held the houses together and lugging off a side of the building at a time.

Actually the bulk of the Island, Mr. Coffin noted, was one vast sheep pasture with gardens and house lots fenced off. According to one definition, a sheep common was equivalent to one and a half acre of land. A survey in 1831

gave the entire Island acreage as 29,380 acres. Estimating the extent of available land at 29,000 acres, each man's share would then be 720 commons for sheep. Multiplying 720 x 27 gives 19,440 which represented the number of sheep commons at the outset. On this basis, 27 men owned the Island.

History indicates, Mr. Coffin said, that the men took what was necessary for homesteading and turned the remainder of the land into sheep commons. Continuing, he said, each of the 27 men could have 720 sheep.

Nature being what is it some men wanted less and some more, so they bought and sold these sheep commons. Then as today it was simply a right to turn sheep loose on the common land. Some people today still hold these Sheep Commons and should they elect to do so may turn a lamb or two loose.

At a later date, he continued, certain large tracts of land were laid out in divisions and these in turn were divided into 27 shares as near equal as possible. Naturally when these divisions were laid out there was considerably more than 27 proprietors thanks to inheritance and bargaining and sale. The result was that few folks could claim a whole share in any one division, but they could claim a fractional interest in one of these shares as in a full share of Common Land. Democratically, lots were drawn to determine in just which share of the new division a man's interest would fall.

According to Mr. Coffin, "The share might contain one acre or 50, according to the extent of the division laid out; but 720 was the common denominator, and a man who owned, say, 45 Sheep Commons of the original land, or more correctly 45/19,440 of the Common Land, would also be the owner of 45/720, undivided, of a certain 'share in Southeast Quarter'; of a certain other 'share in Squam,' and so in several divisions as they were successively laid out. All the land except house-lot land was owned in this manner."

Mr. Coffin explained the Proprietors organized themselves into The Proprietors of the Common and Undivided Lands of Nantucket and held meetings and kept records entirely apart from the records of deeds.

At this point, the history goes, any owner of a Sheep Common was considered a Proprietor and voted in Proprietors' meetings according to the number of Sheep Commons he owned. For approximately 150 years until the dawn of this century, all the lands, aside from house-lot land, was owned in common. Proprietors "steadily refused to set off any one person's interest to him in severalty." These restrictions were broken, however, by several Proprietors with large holdings who took their case to the courts, and won.

In 1821 a "great set-off" began and the number of Sheep Commons reduced.

A sheep common, according to Mr. Coffin, originally meant an acre and a half, but with the passage of time and subdivision it means nothing definite, either in area or value. Describing the present situation, he remarked, "It means simply a certain undivided fractional part of a very uncertain something else, until the whole circumstance of each particular is investigated."

Mr. Coffin noted that in many cases where an undivided interest has remained in the same family for several generations, it has become so sub-divided by inheritance that it is practically impossible for a would-be purchaser to locate all the present owners and secure a perfect title by deed. Today there are about 600 sheep commons still in existence. Unfortunately there isn't any land left they could be exchanged for, he added.

In closing, Mr. Coffin said that Island deeds, particularly early ones, are noted for their lack of description. Land was often bound merely by the names adjoining neighbors or a tree that might well have been cut down over the years.

## "Common Lands" Described In Historical Talk.

Mr. C. Clark Coffin, Nantucket's Town Clerk, gave the fourth of the season's informal talks sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday.

Mr. Coffin described the intricate system by which the early settlers, called "Proprietors", held about 20,000 acres of land on the Island as common property for raising sheep. Each of 27 proprietors was entitled to a share of the land sufficient to pasture 720 sheep, so that over 19,000 sheep were, in theory at least, provided for.

The Island, except for that part comprising the Town which was divided into house lots, was undivided land, the proprietors, as a group, owning it all in common. When it became desirable to set aside some of the land for raising other kinds of stock and for growing grain the same procedure was followed. Large tracts of land called "divisions" were set aside and the owners of sheep commons rights were permitted to hold an undivided interest in these lands based on the number of sheep common shares owned.

However, the Division lands were held in common and not severally, and there must have been many warm arguments about who would do — and pay for — what, in these group farming ventures. Early in the eighteenth century a group of residents demanded their share of these undivided division lands be allotted to them exclusively and personally. This change was strongly opposed by another and the case was carried to court where the advocates of personal holdings finally won out.

Gradually as the sheep raising industry declined most of the sheep commons were turned into undivided divisions, and sheep common rights could be exchanged for pieces of the common undivided land through the proprietors, who, by that time because of increase in population and inheritance spread over large families now numbered several hundred persons. Then the fractional interests acquired in the undivided divisions could be set aside through court action for personal ownership. The task of determining the exact amount of land that any individual was entitled to in exchange for his fractional holdings in undivided land, and just what acreage he should receive was an extremely difficult and intricate problem. However, the process has been nearly completed and almost all the Nantucket land is now owned by individual title holders.

This system of holding land in common and turning fraction shares into personal ownership is believed to be unique, as Nantucket is the only community known to have followed this practice.

Aug. 3, 1956

Aug. 4, 1956



## Treasure Trove Of Maps And Accounts Of Coffin Family Whaling Subject Of Talk

Another link with the Island's great whaling past was discussed Tuesday afternoon by Henry Coffin Carlisle of San Francisco and a perennial Summer resident here, who gave the fifth of the season's informal lectures sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mr. Carlisle discovered this link in the stately red-brick home at 75 Main Street he inherited four years ago. Built in 1833 by his grandfather, Henry Coffin, Mr. Carlisle discovered in the attic of the home a treasure trove of maps and account books relating to the whaling trade in which the Coffin family played such an active part.

Considering the source of his discovery, Mr. Carlisle appropriately entitled his talk "A Nantucket Attic."

He told his audience which filled every pew in the Friends Meeting House that Dr. Will Gardner, author of several books on Nantucket, used many of the old records for his book "The Coffin Saga." In fact, Mr. Carlisle continued, it was Dr. Gardner's desire to do some research in the attic that got Mr. Carlisle started on what he describes as his "attic hobby."

Among the relics discovered there, he said, was an account book that itemized cost and construction of the 123-year-old Main Street house. The figures brought forth a series of dismayed groans for those "good old days" as Mr. Carlisle's listeners learned that the home—it has ten fireplaces—cost \$4,200 to build and the land it stands on another \$3,800. Lumber in those days, he read, cost \$8.10 for a 1,000 feet. The 150,000 bricks that went into its construction were brought from the mainland.

Lots of land at Surfside, according to another one of the books, sold in the middle 19th century for \$20, \$60, \$75, \$100 and \$175.

It was the custom in the days of the whaling era here, Mr. Carlisle said, to purchase shares in a whaling ship and gamble on a profitable voyage that might take as long as four years to complete.

It appears, according to Mr. Carlisle and the records found in his attic, that whaling was far more profitable for the investors and the ship's captain than it was for the simple crewmen. They were usually paid off at the rate of \$200 to \$300 a cruise.

Mr. Carlisle also exhibited a number of small notebooks, all the same size and color, that recorded the amounts of whale oil produced on the many voyages of Coffin ships. One set of books, 30 in number, listed the total barrels of oil processed in a single trip.

In a departure from his talk Mr. Carlisle played a tape recording done in his attic between Mr. Gardner and Edouard Stackpole, an authority on Nantucket history and presently curator of the Mystic Museum in Mystic, Conn. Mr. Gardner quoted from a Coffin dairy that recorded a race between a Starbuck and a Coffin ship. The account was kept by Mr. Carlisle's grandfather when he went to sea as a mate on the latter vessel.

Mr. Stackpole, remarking on the collection of records that remained undisturbed for so many years, said that they proved that figures like Captain Josiah Coffin and Captain Levi Starbuck were men in the tradition of Magellan who charted new waterways over the world and added to their maps the positions of islands never before reported.

Aug. 10, 1956

## Rummaging Through an Attic Described by Henry Carlisle.

The fifth of the season's informal talks sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association was given on August 7th by Mr. Henry Coffin Carlisle, a descendant of a long line of seafaring Nantucket ancestors, who described many interesting "finds" in the attic of his family home at 75 Main Street. This house, constructed of brick and granite brought from the mainland, and with many rooms and ten fireplaces, was built in 1833 at a total cost of \$4200, as shown by an old account book found in the attic. It was one of seven houses built by Zenus Coffin for his sons and daughters.

Other papers found in the attic related to the voyages of the Coffin-owned ships. These ships made altogether over 80 whaling voyages, each lasting from two to six years, and brought great wealth in the form of sperm oil to the Island. Mr. Carlisle described interesting old maps found in the attic and commented on the great contribution made by the Nantucket whalers to geographical knowledge of the vast Pacific and Indian oceans. Many islands in these waters were first discovered and charted by the Nantucket sea captains.

After the last whaling voyage which terminated during the Civil War, Nantucketers tried many financial ventures in search of new prosperity. Mr. Carlisle showed some old stock certificates in companies long since forgotten. None of these ventures appears to have been the hoped-for bonanza, in the 1870's an attempt was made to start a land boom on Nantucket. Subdivisions were laid out and building lots plotted at Surfside, Madaket, Miacomet and other locations on the Island but few lots were sold and fewer houses were built. It was in connection with this effort that a large hotel was built at Surfside and the railroad was constructed from the Town to Surfside and later continued to Siasconset.

It was an informal sort of railroad and would stop to let passengers get off anywhere on the line to pick blueberries or beach plums and would pick them up on the return journey. One day, however, the conductor said the train could not make unscheduled stops on that day because the hard surfaced state road to Sconset had been completed and opened the day before and the train was then racing a man on a bicycle from Town to Sconset.

In conclusion Mr. Carlisle played a tape recording made by Dr. Will Gardner and Mr. Edouard Stackpole while rummaging with Mr. Carlisle in the famous attic.

The next talk on August 14 will be given by Mrs. Leroy H. True on the subject of Abiah Folger Franklin, the Nantucket-born mother of Benjamin Franklin.

Aug. 11, 1956

Carlisle



## Abiah Folger Franklin Subject of Talk.

The informal talk on Tuesday last, under the sponsorship of the Nantucket Historical Association, was given by Mrs. Leroy H. True, Regent of the local Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, who spoke on the mother of Benjamin Franklin, Abiah Folger Franklin, of Nantucket, for whom the Chapter was named.

Little factual information is available about Abiah except indirectly from what is known about her distinguished father and more distinguished son. There is no known picture of her, and few written relics. The Folgers, then spelled Foulger, originated in Belgium where they were skilled weavers of woolen cloth.

In 1564, at the invitation of Queen Elizabeth the First, a large number of Flemish weavers went to England to set up a weaving industry in Norwich, among them the grandparents of Abiah. They were Protestants and Puritans and, like many others of that faith, emigrated to the new world.

In 1635, John Folger and his son Peter arrived in New England and settled at Watertown, near Boston. On the long voyage over, Peter, then 18 years old, fell in love with a fellow passenger, Mary Morris, but as she was an indentured servant they had to wait nine years until she could obtain her freedom and marry.

Peter Folger was a man of great ability in many different fields. Among other accomplishments he became proficient in the Indian language and was much in demand as an interpreter. He served for 20 years as general agent and overseer for Thomas Mayhew on Martha's Vineyard. Then he was invited by Tristram Coffin and the other original settlers of Nantucket to join with them and was given a share in the Nantucket land. He acted as miller on Nantucket, interpreted the discussions and negotiations with the Indians, of whom there were many living on the island, and was a leading and highly respected citizen.

It was in 1664 that he brought his family to Nantucket and built a house in a field on the present Madaket Road the site now marked by a drinking fountain and bronze tablet.

In that house Abiah was born in 1667 and there she married Josiah Franklin, a ship chandler and soap maker of Boston, and went to live with him and his seven children by a former marriage, on Milk Street in Boston. There Benjamin was born in 1706.

Benjamin was very fond of his mother and visited her as often as his many activities permitted. There are several letters in existence which passed between Benjamin and his mother, and his sister Jane in which Abiah is mentioned with deep affection. Mrs. True characterized her as a godly woman, a good wife and mother. She seems to have had great personal charm. She died in Boston in 1752 at the age of 85.

The next talk of the summer series will be an illustrated lecture by Lt. Comdr. Dorothy E. Richards describing a journey through the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. This will be on Tuesday, August 21, at Bennett Hall at 8 o'clock.

## Talk On Franklin's Mother Given Group

One of the most remarkable facts about Abiah Folger Franklin, mother of Benjamin and a native Nantucketer, Mrs. Leroy True believes, is that except for a scattering of old and yellowed news clippings, occasional references to her in books and more recently a magazine article, little is known of the statesman's mother.

Speaking in the Friend's Meeting House Tuesday to visitors and members of the Nantucket Historical Association, Mrs. True said that one must look to the woman's family, her mother and father, and her background to discover just what kind of a person was this woman who lies buried in Boston.

In delving into the life of Abiah Folger Franklin, Mrs. True said, one must go back to the pre-Elizabethan Age to pick up the Folger name, then spelled Folgier. Originally a Flemish family, she continued, they settled in the wool port of Norwich, England to escape the religious restrictions they found earlier in Spain. The family came, said Mrs. True: "to interpret the Bible according to its own light."

It was in Norwich in 1593 that John Folger, Abiah's grandfather was born. The family, according to Mrs. True, was "God fearing" and well educated for that time. At the age of 20 John Folger married. In 1617 Peter was born and later a sister, Ruth. The children were instilled in the simple and devoted faith of their parents. In 1635 Peter's thoughts turned to the new world, and in that same year, Mrs. True told her audience, he transformed his thoughts to deeds and set sail for this country.

Though he wasn't to marry until nine years later, the speaker said, it was on this voyage that Peter met Mary Morrill, his future wife, who at that time was bound to serve a master here.

History records that Peter met Thomas Mayhew in 1638 in Watertown. Eventually he went with him to Martha's Vineyard, but not until he built a reputation as a preacher, blacksmith and Indian interpreter. Peter, Mrs. True said, was a highly respected man who practiced in his relations with others his own religious beliefs. For a period of two years preceding 1664, he and his family lived in Newport, R. I. It was upon return here that Abiah was born. And she, too, Mrs. True continued, was brought up in the ideals of the family.

It's believed she met Josiah Franklin on a trip to Boston to visit a friend. At any rate, he was a widower and the father of seven children. To them were born six more children. Franklin was born and christened all in one day on Jan. 17, 1706.

The inventor and one time printer's devil recalled later, Mrs. True said, that it was a chilly day in Boston at the time, so chilly in fact that the baptismal water had frozen in the Old South Church that day.

Abiah, considered a woman in advance of her time, Mrs. True said, saw to it that her children had sound religious training and a good education. She taught them to read herself.

Mrs. True noted that no picture of this hardworking woman has been discovered, but it's believed that Benjamin bore a strong resemblance to her.

At the close of the meeting it was announced that the next lecture will be held in Bennett Hall at 8 p.m. Tuesday when Lieutenant-Commander Dorothy Richards, USN will speak on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Aug. 17, 1956

## Informal Historical Talks Close With Popular "Ed" Stackpole.

The last of the season's informal talks sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association was given last Tuesday by Mr. Edouard A. Stackpole who told about the discovery of the Antarctic Continent by American sealers. So much has been written about the Nantucket whalers it is not generally known that, besides the whale fleet, Nantucket and other New England seaports sent a large number of ships to hunt for seals and bring back the valuable pelts. This industry, called the "skinning business", required an extremely adventurous type of combined explorer, sailor, and hunter since the vessels had to visit uncharted waters and land on unknown, uninhabited islands in search of the seal herds.

The first sealing grounds visited by the New England sealers were the Falkland Islands, but when the seals there were depleted—as many as 60,000 skins were taken on one voyage—the sealers went further, to the South Shetland Islands. In one season 18 American ships, 18 British and several from other countries were operating in that vicinity.

In the face of such competition and the threatened extinction of the seals, three New England ships sailed in 1820-21 into the unknown Arctic Ocean in search of new rookeries. These ships were the "Hero", Captain Nathaniel Palmer; the "Huron", Captain John Davis, and the "Huntress", Captain Christopher Burdick of Nantucket. All three of these ships sighted the tops of lofty mountains rising through the clouds, a part of the antarctic Continent, and so reported in their log books, but only the "Huron" landed a boat's crew on the continental ice shelf. The discovery and landing were made at the extreme northeast corner of Antarctica on what geographers later called the Palmer Peninsula in the belief that the original discovery was made by Captain Palmer and the ship "Hero". Only in 1947 did the finding of the log of the "Huron" show that the first actual landing was made from that ship, and the American claim to a part of the Antarctic Continent is based on that log, and the discovery is now credited to Captain Davis. However, Captain Burdick in the "Huntress" appears to have been the first to see the mountain tops, which he noted in his log with the comment that he "supposed" they were part of a new continent.

These sealing captains made valuable contributions to geographic knowledge and ran great risks in so doing. They were as truly pioneers of the ocean as their ancestors had been pioneers of New England and their contemporaries were pioneers of the Far West.

Sept. 1, 1956

True

Aug. 18, 1956



**Lt. Comdr. Dorothy E. Richard  
Gives Excellent Lecture.**

An illustrated lecture on the "Trust Territory and Islands of the Pacific" was given Tuesday evening at Bennett Hall by Lt. Comdr. Dorothy E. Richard under the sponsorship of the Nantucket Historical Association.

These islands, once German and later Japanese, are now under the trusteeship of the United Nations with the United States as administrator. All have a civilian government, some under our Navy Department, others under the Interior Department. The extent of the work and responsibility involved can be appreciated when we realize that the expanse of ocean in which these hundreds of islands lie is greater than the whole continental United States while the total land area is about the size of Rhode Island. The local governments of the islands are supposed to fly the flag of the United Nations but are also permitted to fly the American flag. Actually the U. N. flag is never seen but the American flag is displayed everywhere.

For purposes of administration the territory is divided into five districts each with an administrative center. American officials include directors of education, sanitation, inter-island trade and native affairs. There are nine different cultures, nine languages, and several distinct races in the area. The inhabitants elect their own native mayors and magistrates.

This part of the world was well-known to the Nantucket whalers over a century ago as their ships often wintered among the islands, whose names became household words on Nantucket long before they were ever known in other parts of our country.

Naval vessels periodically visit each of the islands for purposes of inspection and to help with local problems and Lt. Comdr. Richard made several trips on these vessels to the small outlying islands, besides making longer stops at the large islands and administrative centers.

The lecture was supplemented by beautiful colored photos taken by Comdr. Richard personally, showing the gorgeous scenery of the territory, the natives in all stages of civilization, their homes and villages. The slides were accompanied by Miss Richard's interesting comment and amusing anecdotes.

It was delightful entertainment for those few who, undeterred by conflicting events scheduled for the same evening, elected to attend. It is to be hoped that Lt. Comdr. Richard can be prevailed upon to repeat her lecture next summer to a larger audience.

The final informal talk of the series will be given on August 28 by Mr. Edouard Stackpole on the subject: "The American Sealers and the Discovery of the Antarctic Continent".

**Navy Officer Talks  
Here On Pacific Isles**

The Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, an area familiar to whalers in the bygone years of Nantucket history and where many of them wintered, was the subject of a lecture and color slide presentation by Lieutenant-Commander Dorothy E. Richards, US Navy, Tuesday night at Bennett Hall.

The lecture, sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association covered a two and a half month trip taken by Commander Richards in 1950, and included the Palau Islands, the Marshalls and the Marianas.

Commander Richards undertook the journey at the request of Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet, at that time and now Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who commissioned the speaker to write a history of the Islands.

Commander Richards who received a Bachelor of Arts from Wellesley College, a Master of Arts at Clark University and a Doctor of Philosophy at Georgetown University has been in the Navy for 14 years. She taught Naval history at the Pensacola and Norfolk Naval Bases and was connected with the Office of Naval History at Washington, D. C. At present the Commander is senior officer in the First Naval District in Boston.

In the Spring of 1950 Commander Richards was flown to Guam which, while not in the Trust Territories, is their logistic center.

The Trust Territories, the speaker said, belonged to Germany prior to World War I. Japan entered the war with the express purpose of obtaining their control, she continued. After accomplishing this task Japan was prepared to retire from further conflict but a treaty with England which said she would guarantee Japan the Islands if she continued fighting kept her in the war.

The Islands under a League of Nations Mandate were given Japan which administrated them from 1922 to their invasion in World War II, Commander Richards stated. Japan made annual reports to the League of Nations on her administration until 1936 when she walked out of the League. Thereafter the Islands were closed to outsiders. The Commander estimated that heavy fortification of the Islands did not begin until 1940.

In 1944, she said, the Islands were taken by US forces and were administrated by a Naval Military Government until July 1947 when they became a trusteeship of the United Nations. They continued to be governed by the Navy but under civil regulations. In 1951, Commander Richards said, they came under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior also and are now administrated by a combination of the two.

From Guam the Commander went to Yap, Karrar and others of the Palau group, Truk, Ponape, Ngatik, Nukuaro, Kapingamarangi, Mokil, Pingelap, Kusaie, Kwajalein and Majuro in the Marshalls and Saipan and Tinian of the Marianas.

The Islands as a whole, the Commander declared, have few natural resources. The people have little ambition as a result of foreign occupation for so many years. In addition, they have developed a taste under foreign masters for things unobtainable on the Islands. To help develop self-sufficiency the Island Trade Company, financed

AUG. 24, 1956

AUG. 25, 1956

Richard



## Island Anecdotes Recounted By Nantucket Author To Historical Association Meeting

### Friends Meeting House Jammed To Hear Will Gardner.

The Friends Meeting House on Fair Street was filled to overflowing last Tuesday afternoon, July 9th, when the Association's President, George Jones, presented Dr. Will Gardner to tell his "Humorous Stories of Nantucketers." The pews of "the elders" up front had been gingerly taken by latecomers. Even the umbrella stand was occupied.

Dr. Gardner, retired minister and teacher, 83-year-old author of several books on the island, and—most important of all—native Nantucketer, opened his lecture with a plea to historians for less emphasis upon the events and more upon the people of a community.

And the people of this community, to whom Dr. Gardner introduced his listeners on Tuesday afternoon, made the argument very valid indeed.

There was old Sarah Winslow, who on her first night in the hospital, remained adamantly sleepless until her buttonhook was fetched and put under her pillow. There was Mollie Starbuck in flowing white gown preparing her wild concoction of "a half-glass of cream, a half-glass of gingerale;" and the Nantucket spinster, caught darning her underdrawers by the visiting minister, who hid them beneath her apron and, when pressed as to what she was knitting, replied glibly "a decoration for my sitting room." There was Mr. Macy who proposed to Mrs. Macy in lengthy doggerel and Mrs. Macy who accepted "the annexation" with "maidenly agitation." There were Arthur Wyer and Charlie Selden, tying ropes across Broad Street to trip up a tuneless band, and putting conspicuous wads of bills into the collection plate (they were Confederate money).

Of Mr. Selden Dr. Gardner had several stories to tell. This Nantucketer, who became a reporter for "The New York Times" and eventually President of the Association of Foreign Correspondents, is the subject of a Memorial Scrapbook currently under preparation.

A few characteristics are common to all Nantucketers, Dr. Gardner explained; among them, a belief in oneself, a certain spitefulness, and a belief in Nantucket as the very center of the world. Perhaps the typical Nantucketer was that little boy in the Coffin School almost 75 years ago, whom Dr. and Mrs. Gardner remember well. During a Friday afternoon composition class he rose to read his paper on Napoleon. "Napoleon was a great soldier and a great statesman," said the boy, "but he was an off-islander."

D. de B.

Dr. Will Gardner, 86-year-old Nantucket historian, gave an amusing and enlightening lecture, "Stories About Nantucketers," as the first historical lecture of the season Tuesday afternoon at the Friends Meeting House under auspices of the Nantucket Historical Association.

The Island historian who says he is "tremendously interested in people" gave a series of anecdotes that illustrated his observations about Nantucket people.

"One of the most celebrated characteristics about Nantucketers," Dr. Gardner said, "is that they regard Nantucket as the center of the world."

"There is the story about Governor Oliver Ames who came to the Island to marry a Nantucket girl," he related. "The governor was standing on the dock on his arrival waiting for his horse and buggy when a Nantucketer approached him. 'Stranger come down to the wedding? The Governor nodded. 'Well,' the Nantucketer said, 'She's a nice girl, but he ain't one of us.'"

Another illustration Dr. Gardner gave of the preoccupation Nantucketers have with their place in the center of the globe is shown in composition of a boy in the Coffin School a good many years ago who wrote, "Napoleon was a great soldier and great statesman, but he was an off-islander."

"Boys and girls in those days had thought and consideration and method about everything they did," related Dr. Gardner.

"A good many years ago the Methodist Church held a midweek meeting," he said. "During one such service four young men dressed in black suits and carrying their bowler hats walked down the aisle and took the front seats. When the collection plate was passed around they each put in a roll of bills held with an elastic band. The minister, who was near, thought, 'What noble young men,' until it was discovered that the money was in Confederate bills. They didn't do anything wrong except deceive the minister for a few minutes, and being a minister he was probably glad he had been deceived for only a few minutes."

Another story Dr. Gardner related involved two of the same boys who were evidently quite high spirited. It seems one night they paid a visit to a clothesline, took all the undergarments belonging to a young lady in town and thumbtacked them to the front door of a young doctor. A strange way to play cupid, but it evidently worked because after the doctor's embarrassed initial visit to return the clothes he went back again and finally married the young lady.

Still another episode involving the late Charles Selden, a hero of the last two episodes, and retired correspondent for the New York Times, took place because there had been a Republican victory. Mr. Selden was a native of Nantucket.

"Charley and a friend of his were Democrats," Dr. Gardner explained. "When a band was formed to celebrate the Republican victory the two boys laid a rope across Broad Street. When the band came by they lifted it knee high and the front part of the band collapsed."

Reminiscing about Mr. Selden, the historian told a story about the newspaperman when he was with the New York Times.

"He was sent out to get a story about a Roman Catholic cathedral," Dr. Gardner said. "Upon going down to the church he discovered that the priest he wanted to speak to was receiving confessions. He waited until the confession box was empty and stepped inside. He said through the grill, 'Father, I'm from the New

York Times.' The priest, tears rolling down his red face, pulled him out of the confession box saying, 'My boy, that's the worst confession I ever heard.'"

Dr. Gardner told several other stories about Nantucketers to his audience of some 100 persons from his wide fund of Nantucket history.

### School History Told At Session

In 1690, Nantucket hired its first teacher, Ichabod Paddock—but to instruct the people in the best manner of killing whales and extracting their oil, William Perkins, principal of the Academy Hill and Cyrus Peirce elementary schools told his audience in a talk Wednesday.

Speaking on "The History of Nantucket Schools" in a Historical Association lecture, Mr. Perkins divided his topic into three categories—domestic, private and public schools.

"The original system of education in New England in the 1640s was typically English," Mr. Perkins said. "There was private instruction in reading and religion with the teaching done by parents, masters of apprentices and town schoolmasters."

Nantucket was growing and shortly passed from the point of domestic education to private education, the lecturer said. He pointed out, however, that Nantucket did not see fit to obey the law of the State which specified that "every town having 50 householders shall appoint one within their town to teach and that every town having 100 householders must provide a grammar school."

Mr. Perkins said that Nantucket was not without schools, however, and elaborated on the kind of schools that was established.

"Many small schools were established by wives, widows and unmarried women because of need for an income," he said. "The subjects were reading, spelling, counting, sewing and sometimes just plain baby sitting."

"An old twist was in the case of those who thought to add to their income by teaching," he said. "Nowadays it would be just the opposite."

"There were other schools in this period such as dancing, navigation and mariners' schools," Mr. Perkins said.

Certain schools were established to perpetuate a name, the lecturer related.

"The Coffin School, established in 1827, was built for that reason," he said. "Sir Isaac said it would just be for his kin, which doesn't appear very democratic. But the

fact of the matter was, according to William Coffin, genealogist, that this included just about every child on the Island between the ages of seven to 14."

One of the most interesting of Nantucket schools at this time was the Nantucket School Ship, the bark Clio, commanded by Captain Pinkham of Nantucket, Mr. Perkins said.

"This ship which operated out of Boston was a training ship for life at sea," he said. "The course of study included carpentry, blacksmithing, wrestling, astronomy and slaughtering."

In 1826 a small group of indignant citizens brought suit in Massachusetts court to compel Selectmen to comply with State laws on free schooling, Mr. Perkins said.

"The suit was never completed because in the same year a public school system complete with a School committee was created," the lecturer explained. "The town appropriated \$2500 and set up two schools. A monitorial system was adopted and the curriculum included spelling, reading, writing, geography, arithmetic and grammar."

By 1844 Nantucket had 15 schools, Mr. Perkins continued. In 1850 there were 12 schools with 1200 pupils and 31 teachers. In

1903 the number of pupils went to 500 and 14 teachers, the lecturer said.

"In 1844," Mr. Perkins said "the pupils had some unusual holidays. Every year they had two days off for sheep washing and shearing."

Gardner - Perkins



## Artist Recreates Early Sconset Of Fringed Surrey, Oil Lamps And Tea Parties In Talk

The early Sconset days of the fringed surrey, oil lamps and tea parties where only tea was served were recreated by Miss Mary Turlay Robinson, artist and long time Sconset resident in a Nantucket Historical Association talk Tuesday.

"Sconset and Town With My Grandmother", Miss Robinson's topic, carried her audience at the Friend's Meeting House back to the period of the 1880s to 1917.

"Some of my memories are hearsay, told to me by my grandmother, Mrs. Mary Dresser Turlay, as I was too young to remember," the speaker said. "My grandmother came to Sconset in the 1880s and bought a tiny cottage, Castle Bandbox, that still exists. Sconset in those days was a small village of old homes and big open spaces."

Miss Robinson's earliest memories date from the 1890s in a house her grandmother bought on south bluff, Swallows' Nest.

"The house had a plain interior and unpainted woodwork," Miss Robinson said. "Of course, there weren't any telephones and every morning the butcher, grocer and fisherman would come around in their wagons to take your orders."

Sconset Casino was as much a center of activity in those days as it is today, Miss Robinson said.

"There was tennis, weekly dances and morning musicales given by visiting musicians," she added. "But life in those days was of a more formal nature and entertainment in part consisted in calling on friends. And, of course, there were beach parties and picnics."

Miss Robinson recalled the days of the theatrical colony in Sconset when she was in her teens.

"I developed a hero worship of Isabelle Irving, a famous actress of that day, and even though my parents frowned on theater people I was allowed to visit with her," she said.

"One day Miss Irving's maid announced that Lillian Russell had come to call. When Miss Russell swept in with a black velvet hat and pink silk suit with a black velvet collar, I was all eyes and ears."

"After a few minutes Miss Russell turned to me and said 'I hope you're working for woman suffrage.' When I sheepishly murmured I wasn't, the subject couldn't even be mentioned at home, Miss Russell said 'What will you do when your husband turns to you and says you're nothing but a woman'."

"Cigaret smoking by women was simply not done in those days," Miss Robinson said. "But Miss Irving offered one to Miss Russell. The actress declined saying, she preferred her own, opened her handbag and pulled out a cigar."

"I went home very impressed and told my family. My grandmother turned a very cold look on me and said as if something dreadful had happened to me, 'I'm sorry to hear about it, my dear.'"

"Getting mail in those days was a very big event," the speaker said. "Telegrams arrived by mail from town. One day Grandmother found one slit open in with the mail. The postmistress had thoughtfully written on it 'Nothing to worry about, Mrs. Turlay.'"

Another episode the speaker recalled concerned snail races she and a friend used to hold.

"I had a complete stable I kept in a box with the top slightly open to give them air," she said. "One day I opened it too wide and the snails all escaped. For years after we found dead snails around the house."

Miss Robinson said that transportation was by the famous Sconset railroad or by horse and surrey.

"There weren't any roads," she explained, "just ruts in the grass. We used to take the train to go blueberrying and make the engineer let us off at a good spot."

Several Sconset people were recalled by Miss Robinson such as Bill Bowen, the retired Town Crier; Henry Holmes who did odd jobs and Miss Elizabeth Coffin.

Miss Robinson ended her talk by quoting a poem by Bliss Carman "Sconset."

## "Days of My Grandmother" Described in Tuesday Talk

"If Mary Turlay Robinson wasn't born on Nantucket, she came awfully close to it—arriving here at the age of 9 months," President George W. Jones told the Nantucket Historical Association in introducing her last Tuesday afternoon. Miss Robinson served as a member of the International Exchange Service to France in 1954. To counteract the Hollywood version of this country current over there, she selected as "a fine example of American life"—Nantucket. Last Tuesday she selected as an example of turn-of-the-century Island life "Sconset in the days of My Grandmother."

Mrs. Turlay's unpainted cottage (regretfully sold last autumn) stands on South Bluff. Wildness was once at its doorstep. Now firmly fastened down with rugosa, ivy and beach-plums, it was a problem then to keep the Bluff from washing out in the heavy rains. In the '80's today's highway was a grassy road with three ruts: two for wheels and one for horses.

Daily the butcher, grocer and fisherman came by to take orders and were back at noon with their wares. Mr. Levi Coffin, son of one of the town's most distinguished citizens, gave up a career in finance to sell vegetables: "I would rather be a farmer on Nantucket than a banker in Boston." And Henry Holmes went from house to house as odd-job-man. Miss Robinson remembers with a child's sharp vision Sam Pitman with "the bluest eyes in the world" and Billy Bowen, retired town crier, at the doorstep of his invitingly dark small house.

Two-wheeled carts going for kelp beyond the Bluff were a common sight and so was the fringed surrey. Speaking of transportation, the little Sconset railway was known to wait patiently for blueberry-pickers at choice spots.

"There was a great deal more fog in those days and vastly more snails," Miss Robinson remembers racing specimens of the latter from a private "stable" in a glass-topped box.

On moor drives to secret places the delicate pink flowers of the seabacia and the gloxinia-like blooms of the September gerardia could be gathered—as well as pink mallow, red lilies and white orchids. A year ago the last hiding-place of the white orchid was unwittingly bulldozed for the town dump.

In the speaker's childhood the Casino held weekly dances and morning musicales. Some of the boats took on chartered parties and box-lunches, and looking back, one would see the beach dotted with little tents instead of the modern umbrellas.

"Sconset was peace, quiet, fresh air, beach and a sprinkling of interesting people. There was no Elvis Presley." But at the turn-of-the-century an Actors' Colony had settled in the town. Miss Robinson remembers beach walks with Isabel Irving and an afternoon visit with Lillian Russell. The actress wore a pink suit with velvet collar and a black velvet hat. "I hope you're working for Women's Suffrage," she said, taking a positive puff on her cigar.

In 1917 "the whole system of life changed." The little train was scrapped, the tracks went to France and automobiles came. But the bare shingled houses were still inspiring poets like Bliss Carman.

Miss Mary Turlay Robinson is donating a china doll named Rosalind, once the property of Mary Turlay, to the Historical Association. Last Tuesday she gave her audience at the Quaker Meeting House a less tangible—but no less delightful—glimpse of old Sconset.

D. de B.

Aug. 17, 1957

Aug. 15, 1957

Robinson



## Stackpole Talk on "Mutinies" At Friends Meeting House.

"Among men cooped up month after month elbow to elbow on a little ship violent upheaval is almost inevitable. . . . In every case of mutiny the forces which caused it seem to lie beyond the control of the mutineers themselves. . . . Although we cannot condone mutiny, I think we can sympathize with the mutineer." Last Tuesday afternoon Edouard A. Stackpole, former associate editor of *The Inquirer and Mirror*, and now Curator of the Marine Historical Association, Mystic Seaport, Mystic, Conn., told his audience at the Friends Meeting House stories of revolutions on board ship and of the men who caused them. The talk, "Mutinies and Men," was the fourth in a series sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Mr. Stackpole's sure knowledge of the sea and sailors is evidenced not only in his present position but by six titles among his published works: "Smuggler's Luck," "You Fight for Treasure," "Madagascar Jack," "Privateer Ahoy," "Mutiny at Midnight," and "The Sea-Hunters." By exploring the human motives behind the adventures he relates, the speaker, as Mr. George W. Jones, President of the Association, suggested, "makes our ancestors our contemporaries."

"The most classic of mutinies was that on board the 'Globe.'" A Nantucket whaleship, she had put in at the Hawaiian Islands mid-voyage in 1823 and there taken on six untrained crew members to replace deserters. On the night of January 26, 1824, the six "beachcombers" under the leadership of Samuel B. Comstock, boat-steerer, son of a Nantucket schoolmaster, suddenly seized control of the ship and went from cabin to cabin massacring the captain and mates. Among those frozen with horror and cowed into submission was the chief mutineer's 15-year-old brother. Later Comstock was killed while attempting to fit his followers into his private vision of a paradise kingdom in the Marshall Islands; and the Nantucket schoolmaster pondered the strange forces which could overnight so warp a mind and was dumbfounded: "O, Samuel, Samuel, heaven-forsaken Samuel!"

On board another Nantucket vessel, the "Planter," cruising off King-smith in 1849, Captain Isaac Hussey faced a rebellious crew on starvation rations and killed its ringleader with a single pistol shot. Perhaps his conscience hurt him, for he did not return with the ship and, docking it at Sydney, took over command of the schooner "William Penn." Here history repeated itself. Touching at the Caroline Islands, the ship took on mutinous natives and this time Captain Hussey hesitated—and lost his life.

Mr. Stackpole's stories included those of Captain Rogers of the "Beaver" who marooned a disgruntled sailor on a South Sea island and was exonerated in court for his act, of Captain Briggs of the "Shakespeare" who, in the face of an angry crew, leaped overboard, and of a case of "indirect mutiny . . . in the Shakespearean manner" — the slow poisoning of Captain Norton of the "Morning Star" by his steward.

The little-known tale of a curiously "modern" mutiny as told by a seafaring schoolteacher has been published by the Marine Historical Association at Mystic. It is Walter Hammond's "Mutiny on the Pedro Varela." "The mutiny on board the 'Pedro Varela' is the only one of its type yet uncovered in the history of whaling. . . . To accomplish their purpose, the men of the 'Pedro Varela' chose a method far different but more effective than open mutiny. During the darkness of a night watch they threw overboard many of the implements used on board ship—harpoons, lances, cooper's tools, bailers, skimmers, spades, and most important all the iron parts of the windlass. This put an end to further whaling insofar as that cruise was concerned and seriously interrupted the voyage."

To consider the hardships of long confinement in cramped quarters is to be surprised by the small number of recorded mutinies. Crews existed on vegetables "boiled for day . . . the peas so hard they had to be pulverized" and on water "slimy with growths." The revolt was usually an act of the moment when passions too long restrained suddenly erupted. Mr. Stackpole emphasized the volcanic spontaneity of the "average mutiny."

But there were, of course, exceptions. One of the best stories of pre-meditated mutiny concerned the cool and wily Cyrus Plummer who competently shot his way to command and proved himself in the subsequent court hearing more than equal to any lawyer who cross-examined him. The judge, "probably unfamiliar with sea-board life," handed down a sentence of only 20 years, which Plummer was able to commute to seven.

The mutiny to end mutinies in the U. S. Navy took place on board the "Somers," our first training ship, in 1842. One hundred twenty men were confined on a 103-foot vessel. Seven of them, including Philip Spencer, son of the Secretary of War, rebelled and were promptly punished by Commander Alexander Slidell MacKenzie—three by hanging and four by confinement to irons. For 40 days the captain stood trial until the historic decision by the court which exonerated him and defended the right of every American captain to full and absolute mastery over his vessel.

## Unbridled Passions In Historic Mutinies Subject Of Historian's Talk Here

The unbridled passions and strife of men on the high seas was vividly recreated by Edouard A. Stackpole, Island historian and curator of the Mystic Seaport, Mystic, Conn. in the final Historical Association talk of the season Wednesday afternoon.

Mr. Stackpole who has authored several books including "The Sea-Hunters" spoke on "Mutinies and Men" at the Friends Meeting House.

The past president of the Historical Association told his audience that his topic "Rounds out the study of anything to do with the sea." He said mutinies have all the fascination of murder mystery books "With the added element of real human personalities."

Mutinies were not restricted to the sea but occurred also on land, he said. As an example he cited the slaves of Thrace who attempted in 73 B. C. unsuccessfully to revolt against their masters.

The lecturer quoted a definition of mutiny by T. H. Wintringham, "Revolt of men under discipline of life or death."

The first sea mutiny, Mr. Stackpole detailed, was on the "Planter" of Nantucket in 1849. The crew of the ship gathered on the fossil head, he related, and refused to come aft when their captain, Isaac B. Hussey, ordered them to.

"The Captain ordered the ringleader to step forward and when he refused Hussey took out his pistol and shot him," Mr. Stackpole said.

The Nantucket historian related that the Captain was criticized by the other officers for what they termed hasty action and took refuge in Sidney, Australia. He went to sea again on the William Penn.

"Once again the Captain was faced with a mutinous crew," Mr. Stackpole said. "But this time as the ringleader approached him, he hesitated, his hand on his gun, perhaps remembering that other time. Whatever the reason for his hesitation it cost him his life, the lecturer said. For the mutinous crew member stabbed him to death through the heart."

Mr. Stackpole termed the Globe Mutiny, recently featured in a book by James Mitchner and a Tribune magazine article, the "classic mutiny."

"It has all the elements of a great drama," the lecturer said. "The chief mutineer 18-year-old Samuel Comstock and his group of bloodthirsty conspirators silently creeping through the ship to the helm manned by his 15-year-old brother, George—George starting to give an alarm and Sam telling him if he made a single sound he would be instantly killed. Imagine what conflicts and passions must have passed between them in that single instant."

## Curator Stackpole Sails Exhibit Craft

Edouard A. Stackpole, Island author and historian and curator of the Mystic Museum, Mystic, Conn. is one curator who believes in getting his ancient exhibits to the museum even if he has to sail them himself.

On August 1 the intrepid sailor set out in a 45 year-old boat of English cutter design from Oster-ville at 6 a.m. The 18-foot vessel is one of a group of American small craft that Mr. Stackpole is assembling.

The sail was a rough one, Stackpole admitted. He and Captain James Kleinschmidt, also of Mystic, were headed for Newport when they ran into strong head winds and a headtide going through Vineyard Sound. Shortly before 6 p.m. the pair put in at South Dartmouth.

Mr. Stackpole arrived on Nantucket by steamer Friday to give an illustrated lecture "A Nantucket Holiday" for benefit of the Sons and Daughters of Nantucket. He returned to New Bedford Sunday to complete his sailing adventure.

The Island historian said that for a boat of that size the vessel was very well rigged. He said it has a gaff rigged mainsail, club topsail and staysail and jib.

"In the future I hope we can transport our exhibits by truck," Mr. Stackpole said, "but it was fun putting to sea."

Aug. 9, 1957

Aug. 31, 1957

Aug. 30, 1957

Stackpole



### Nantucket Schools Subject Of Historical Talk.

The second in a series of free informal talks under the auspices of the Nantucket Historical Association was given last Tuesday afternoon at the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street. The speaker was Mr. William Perkins; his subject, "The History of Nantucket Schools."

Mr. Perkins has explored the educational by-ways of the island — in classroom, library, and graveyard — uncovering, as he said, "great deeds humbly done and simple deeds greatly performed."

When Nantucket was first settled, three major Education Laws were on the State books. With characteristic independence the island ignored them and created her own system of schooling in the home. In 1690, her first teacher on record, Ichabod Paddock, appears; his subject, "the killing of whales and extraction of their oil." Gradually the island was passing from what Mr. Perkins termed the "domestic" to the "private" period of education.

A widow or spinster in straitened circumstances would set up a "dame school"—little more than a baby-sitting establishment and there, as the English verse had it, "she sits and awes some thirty infants as she knits." Clergymen, on the lookout for extra income, mariners obsessed with Nantucket's nautical future, Coffins anxious to perpetuate a name, established their own schools. On the brig "Cleo" young boys, with the gilt scroll "Nantucket School" on their blue caps, learned seamanship on arduous treks to Quebec and the Rio Grande. And there were the Charity Schools, for lack of fire open only during the warm months, and one of them christened the "Fragment School" after the scraps it received in answer to an appeal to clothe its students.

The long period during which Nantucket set up her own free schools, Mr. Perkins calls the "most spectacular." Samuel H. Jenks, editor of "The Inquirer," crusaded for the schools through his newspaper columns and the town meetings. He was accused of "Boston notions"; but in 1827, 180 years after the first Massachusetts School Law, Nantucket had two public schools, one under William Mitchell at the corner of Main and Milk, and the other under Nathaniel Obed Barney. By 1844 there were 15 — in the north, south, and west parts of town and in Polpis, Sconset, and Tuckernuck.

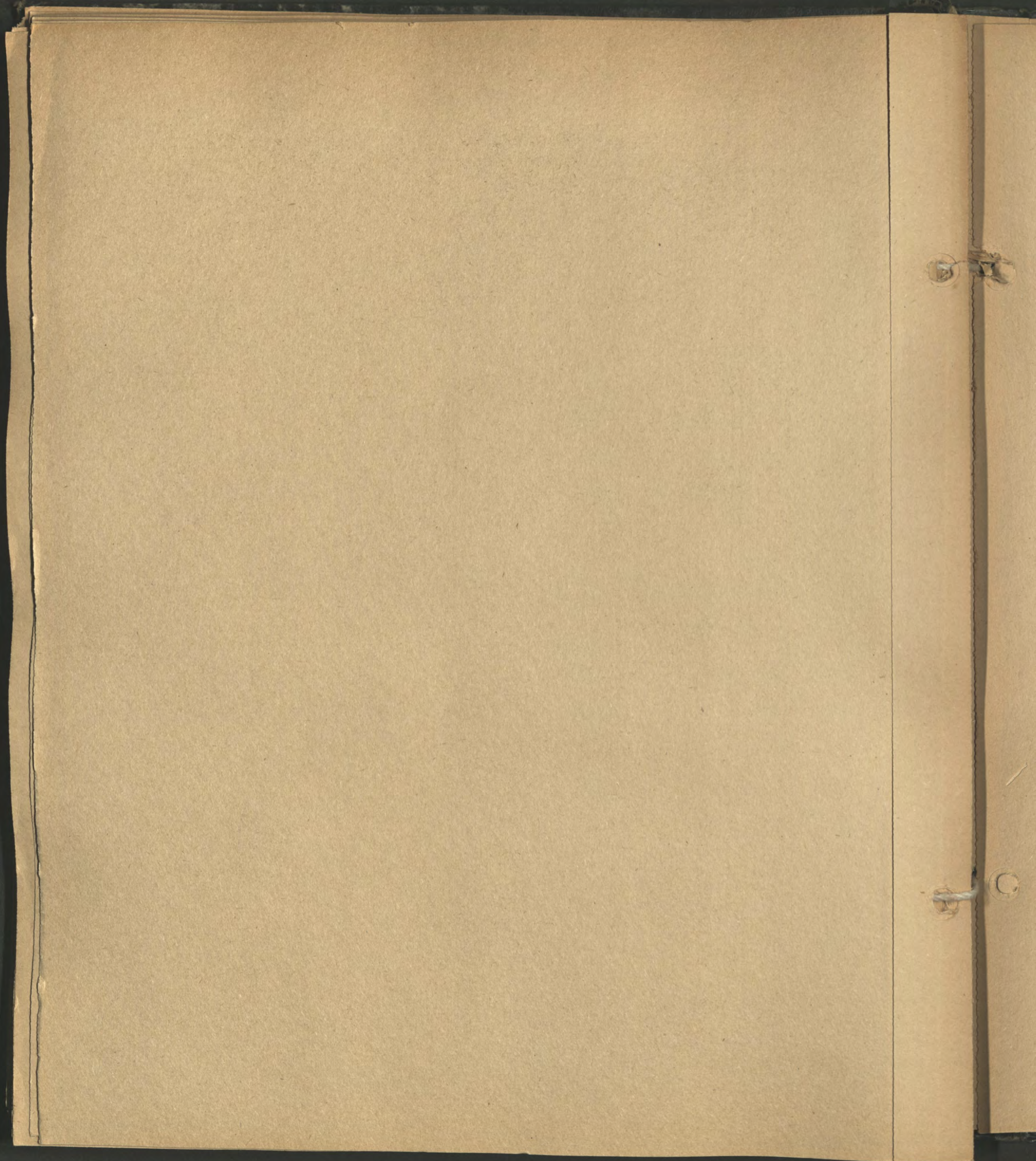
The speaker's thesis was the steady progress of educational facilities and standards on the island. As principal of two of Nantucket's schools and thorough student of her history since his arrival here eight years ago, Mr. Perkins is his own best example.

D. de B.

July 8, 1957

Perkins









George W. Jones, president of the Nantucket Historical Association, left, is shown accepting a painting of the Old Mill here at the 64th annual meeting from F. Gregg Bemis, president of the Bemis Brothers Company of Boston which commissioned Artist Lloyd P. Harting to do it.

July 19, 1958

#### Historical Assn. Given Land At Annual Meeting.

The annual meeting and election of officers of the Nantucket Historical Association was held Tuesday afternoon in the Great Hall at the Nantucket Atheneum with about 50 members in attendance.

The meeting opened with President George W. Jones extending a welcome to all, followed by a reading of the minutes of the last annual meeting by the secretary, Miss Ethel Anderson.

During the business session it was voted to amend the Certificate of Incorporation, issued by the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on July 9, 1894, by adding a section to the "purposes" clause to allow a greater expansion in the work of the organization.

President Jones gave his annual report and account of the additions to the exhibits in the past year.

He told of repair work to the old mill, the acquisition of the business account books of Charles and Henry Coffin, and a series of letters from their ship captains, and a log book and letters of Captain Henry Phelan, who was master of both the "Omega" and "Three Brothers" whaling ships.

President Jones also spoke of the birth of the Nantucket Historical Trust, the coming 300th celebration next year, and paid tribute to members, Everett U. Crosby and Dr. William E. Gardner.

During the election of officers Mr. Jones was re-elected president for another year.

Elected vice-presidents were: Miss Grace Brown Gardner, Everett U. Crosby, Howard U. Chase, Burnham N. Dell, W. Ripley Nelson, and Stokeley W. Morgan.

Other officers elected were: Miss Ethel Anderson, secretary; Ormond F. Ingall, auditor, and Robert C. Caldwell and Miss Alma Robbins, councilors until 1962.

Dr. Gardner was called on to say a few words and he spoke of the life of Peter Folger, whose daughter, Abiah, became the wife of Josiah Franklin, and mother of the great American inventor and statesman, Benjamin Franklin. He told of walking out to the fountain on the Madaket Road, which commemorates the birthplace of Abiah Folger Franklin, and visualizing a memorial park on the land that was farmed by Peter Folger and where Abiah was raised.

Dr. Gardner then called on Thomas Hallowell, of Hulbert Avenue and New York, to give him the answer as to who owns the land he was talking about.

Mr. Hallowell replied, "Strange as it may be, I happen to be in the position of owning it."

Mr. Hallowell went on to say that Dr. Gardner had talked with him about the possibility of the association acquiring the land for both a memorial and a park. He said that he agreed with him and that he would be pleased to give the land to the association, but that he felt that as the idea was entirely Dr. Gardner's that it should be given in his name.

Mr. Hallowell then presented the deed to the land to President Jones, who accepted it with thanks.

Also a feature of the meeting was the presentation of an oil painting of the Old Mill by F. Gregg Bemis, of Brookline, president of the Bemis Bros. Bag Co.

Mr. Bemis stated that, starting back in 1930, the company had been using paintings of old mills from all over the country to feature on their Christmas cards. He said that these paintings are presented to historic associations or museums when possible and this one of the Nantucket mill is to be used on the 1958 cards.

Mr. Bemis said it was noteworthy that his company is celebrating its 100th year of business and that he was pleased to present this painting to the association located in a town that will soon be celebrating its 300th anniversary of its settlement.

The painting was accepted with thanks by President Jones, on behalf of the association.

An unexpected speaker was Edouard Stackpole who was called on by President Jones to speak.

Mr. Stackpole pointed out the fact that many of the roots of history are found in the records of Nantucket. He told of being called to speak at a celebration held at Hudson, N. Y., and how a great deal of his information about the founding of the town was located here.

July 19, 1958



## Historian E. A. Stackpole Authors Book On Scrimshaw, Folk Art Of US Whalemen

Scrimshaw, the folk art of the American whaler and one of the most interesting crafts in our maritime history, is pictured in words and by photographs in "Scrimshaw at Mystic Seaport", written by Eduard Stackpole, and published by the Marine Historical Association at Mystic, Conn.

One of Nantucket's favorite sons and ablest historians, Mr. Stackpole is also the author of "The Sea Hunters", a history of whaling that has become the classic in its field.

A capsule history of Whaling introduces the reader to the locale and background for the production of scrimshaw articles.

The term scrimshaw is explained as meaning two things. "It denotes both the art form itself and the varied products of the craft. To pass the time during long hours of leisure on shipboard, whalemen of New England originated this maritime folk art. It was developed by a process of etching and carving on whale teeth and bone and the ingenious use of whale ivory, tortoise and sea shell as inlay for wood. Thus, the art covered a wide range of objects, both useful and ornamental, made usually as keepsakes for the folks at home."

"Jagging" or "crimping" wheels, used for marking the edges of pies or tarts, were useful items made on shipboard and saved to give to a member of the family whenever the ship returned to home port.

Pictured in this volume which includes 33 plates of prize scrimshaw articles, is a pie-wheel of unusually intricate design. Two serpent heads form the handle, and a fork is set off at right angles to the body of the tool. A well-cut design on the opposite side and an inlay of ebony runs in two narrow bands around the base of the handle.

For cleverness in workmanship and construction, the yarn winding reel, or "swift" was in a class by itself. It was probably second to the jagging wheel in popularity.

The "swift" was made of strips of whalebone, cut and polished in uniform lengths. These strips were skillfully arranged so that, when properly interlaced and fastened by brass or copper pins, and tied with serving twine, the whole might be opened like an umbrella.

Cane heads and canes are also included in the outstanding collection of scrimshaw at the Mystic Museum and illustrated here. Some of these are of one-piece whalebone, and others are a com-

bination of wood and bone, with ivory head.

Describing the great variety of design in cane heads, Mr. Stackpole writes "Patterns included floral and geometric designs, the heads of dogs, geese, snakes and seals; Turks-Head knot patterns; scrolls or rounded ball-type heads; clenched fists, basked weaves and beautifully inlaid patterns—and last, but hardly least the delicately shaped leg of a woman in miniature, usually bent at the knee in an alluring turn."

Not all scrimshaw was executed by sailors. When Captain William T. Swain, of the Schooner "Eliza Jane", returned to Nantucket in 1878, he had a spool-holder made of bone which the wife of Captain Israel Morey had made aboard the ship "Catawba" at Desolation.

"We have but to look at the everyday routine of the whaleship to grasp the true significance of scrimshaw," Mr. Stackpole writes. "Time was a calculated commodity. For an average of three years for each voyage, the officers and crew found their floating home either a symbol of their hope and courage or a marine prison where in the worst of their natures came blazing into the open."

"Between long cruises on the whaling grounds were spaced stops at the tropical isles of the South Seas, the bleak shores of Antarctic islands or Arctic coasts, and the drab ports of call on remote coasts or exotic East Indies and Africa."

"The excitement of the chase and capture of the whale was succeeded quickly by long periods of shipboard routine and monotony. Here was scrimshaw's greatest role—the relief from the utter boredom of sea and sky, of scrubbing decks, tarring rigging and long fruitless rowings for whales who escaped to windward."

Answering those historians who believe scrimshaw to be an authentic American seafaring art, Mr. Stackpole traces the development of carving on elephant, walrus, and seal tusks. "Scrimshaw is simply a seafaring development of the ancient craft of ivory-carving, as practiced through five centuries. In other words, it was actually the contribution of the American whaler to this established art-form."

Once a part of the household scene of everyday life in seaport towns, scrimshaw is now a collector's item. Outstanding collections of scrimshaw in museums are to be found in the whaling museum at New Bedford, the Kendall Museum in Sharon, the Peabody Museum in Salem, as well as those in Mystic and at Nantucket's own

Whaling Museum.

Evaluating scrimshaw as a definite kind of folk art, Mr. Stackpole writes that "something greater than crude skill or untaught efforts at artistry is represented by its many forms. It stands on its own merit as a document of the whaler and the times in which he lived, a mute but distinctive expression of his innate thoughts of home while thousands of miles and years away from the voyage's end."

## Historical Association Pays Tribute To Mitchell Observatory On 50th Birthday

"A sense of responsibility to the community in which they live is a characteristic of all Nantucketers," remarked Edouard A. Stackpole, past president of the Nantucket Historical Association and curator of the Marine Historical Museum of Mystic, Conn., in addressing a large crowd at the Atheneum Tuesday evening on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the Maria Mitchell Observatory.

Following an account of the history of the Observatory by Miss Margaret Harwood, director during its first 45 years, Mr. Stackpole discussed the relationship between the Observatory and the Atheneum, the Nantucket Historical Association and other organizations that are "attracting the American public so that they can enjoy the American past."

Introducing the speakers, Dr. Dorrit Hoffleit, director of the Observatory, set the theme for the evening in saying, "The good old days are good if they form a firm foundation for the future." In her talk Miss Harwood related the problems of the founding of the Observatory and the eventual solutions that made it possible to look back at that period as "the good old days."

Miss Harwood told and showed slides of how the Maria Mitchell Observatory grew from the original block brick building with a copper dome to the present group of buildings including the enlarged Observatory, the Maria Mitchell Memorial House where the famous woman astronomer was born and the Observatory Cottage used as a home for the director. She described how the five-inch telescope was shipped

"It is up to the town to get behind the Maria Mitchell Association, the Atheneum and the Historical Association in their efforts to revive the past," Mr. Stackpole concluded, so that Nantucket's value as an historical and tourist center will be even greater in the future. The success of such concerted efforts will bring visitors to the Island in November and December as well as in July and August, the speaker explained.

Mr. Stackpole paid tribute to Maria Mitchell's contributions to the community as well as to astronomy in his lecture. Although "the great fire burned out more source material of Nantucket history than anything else during its past" when it destroyed the original Atheneum, he said, Miss Mitchell, the librarian, had carefully catalogued the building's contents and proceeded to support the construction of a new Atheneum. "Maria would have taken the space age more in stride than we do," he added.

Concurring with Dr. Hoffleit's introductory words, Mr. Stackpole concluded saying, "We don't know where we're going unless we know where we've been."

here from England through a hurricane and how it nearly knocked down one of the walls after it was installed.

Miss Harwood credited much of the success of Observatory to the support of Miss Lydia S. Hinchman. She said it was Miss Hinchman who established the fellowship that enabled the Observatory to maintain a year-round director. She expressed hope that additional support will make it possible to re-establish this practice as funds are presently sufficient to maintain a director only half the year.

"No one can walk through the streets of this town without feeling that he is stepping in the past," said Mr. Stackpole. Nantucket can capitalize upon this characteristic, he said, because "Americans are getting more and more anxious to learn about their past."

Greeting members and friends of the Association in front of the library were Miss Andrea Knudsen, Wellesley class of 1960, and Miss Margo Friedel, Vassar class of 1960, Dr. Hoffleit's two Summer assistants at the Observatory. The girls wore costumes from the era of Maria Mitchell, loaned by Miss Margaret Fawcett Wilson.

About 30 people visited the Observatory between 2 and 5 p.m. Tuesday when it was open to the public, Dr. Hoffleit reported. An exhibit of publications by Miss Harwood and one of notes on women in astronomy were on display at the Observatory during the afternoon. About 60 attended a birthday party with refreshments at the Hinchman House from 4 to 6 p.m., the director said. Mrs. Francis Davis and Mrs. Roger Merrill served as hostesses.



## Nantucket Historical Group Re-elects Committee Heads

Special to The Standard-Times

NANTUCKET, Sept. 2—Re-election of chairmen of committees in charge of buildings of the Nantucket Historical Association featured the monthly meeting of the association.

Those re-elected and the buildings over which they will have under their administrative charge are: Oldest House, Mrs. William Perkins; Historical Museum, Mrs. William L. Mather; 1800 House, Mrs. Walton H. Adams; Old Mill, Robert Caldwell; Old Jail, Oswell J. Small, and the Whaling Museum, W. Ripley Nelson.

At the Historical Museum, Mrs. Mather will be assisted by Mrs. Walton H. Adams and Miss Alma Robbins. Mrs. Kent King and Albert Egan Jr. will serve again as Whaling Museum committee members. Since the whaling history of Nantucket will be featured prominently in the 300th anniversary celebration next year, the Whaling Museum committee will be enlarged. The association announced William H. Tripp, will serve as a member of this committee.

Mr. Tripp a life member of the association, is a recognized authority and frequent lecturer on whaling and the history of the industry. He started at the age of 10 taking photos of whaling ships at the docks in New Bedford and from that time on photography and whaling have been two of his hobbies.

After 31 years service Mr. Tripp retired from the First National Bank of New Bedford. He was elected assistant curator of the Old Dartmouth Historical Society and the Bourne Whaling Museum of New Bedford. In 1932 he was elected curator and served actively until 1955 when he retired after 22 years of service. In 1925 he gained first-hand knowledge of whaling when he sailed on the schooner John R. Manta as a guest of the captain.

For six weeks they cruised on the Hatteras grounds. Seven whales were captured. During this cruise he obtained 250 photographs of the entire process which together with many other photos are shown by him when he lectures. As a result of his annual visits to Nantucket for the past 40 years he has many friends on the island.

Stokeley W. Morgan was re-elected chairman of the finance committee and W. Ripley Nelson was elected chairman of the publicity and advertising committee.

President George W. Jones, who is also chairman of the 300th anniversary steering committee, reported it is planned to stage next year contests between ancient fire-fighting equipment manned by island and off-island teams. The council voted to have the old "hand-tubs" placed in working condition. The other ancient "tub" is marked "Siasconset."

## 300th Anniversary Number Of "Historic Nantucket"

The January issue of "Historic Nantucket," the quarterly magazine published by the Nantucket Historical Association, has just been mailed to all members of the Association. It is the "300th Anniversary Number" and, as such, the opening gun in the celebration of Nantucket's 300th birthday which falls on July 2, 1959, and for which a schedule of over 70 events beginning January 15 and ending September 15 is planned.

Dr. Will Gardner, in the lead article, suggests the re-reading of the few documents, through which the sale of the Island by Thomas Mayhew to Tristram Coffin and his associates, was completed, starts the imagination and pictures begin to appear. He described "Four Mind-Pictures" covering the events of 1659. The first arises from the deed, copy of which is reproduced, which is unusual because of the price: "30 English pounds and 2 beaver Hats, one for myself and one for my wife." Why the beaver hats is the question the first mind-picture answers.

The second picture attempts to answer several questions, namely, why did the Merrimac Valley dwellers choose Nantucket? When and how did the first suggestion of the bargain come? A picturesque meeting between Mayhew and his Cousin Macy in the latter's new house in Amesbury, Mass., about 1654 provides plausible answers. A picture of the house appears on the cover.

The third picture is of the first meeting of Tristram Coffin with the group he selected to be "purchasers." The fourth is at the wigwam of Sachem Namahuma on a neck of land on Hummock Pond, when the Indians signed the first deed selling the land to Thomas Mayhew, 12 days before he signed the Nantucket deed with Tristram Coffin and his associates. The four "mind-pictures" are drawn with Dr. Gardner's usual masterful touch. It is a fitting introduction for Nantucket's Anniversary.

"Peter Folger, Able and Godly," is the title of an interesting life story of the man who negotiated with the Indians the original Nantucket land deeds and who served the community in numerous ways. It was written especially for the association's 300th Anniversary issue by Miss Babette M. Levy, M. A., Ph.D. and presently

an Associate Professor at Hunter College, New York.

"It Pays to Advertise," was just as true 100 years ago as today. Proof thereof is found in an article by Mrs. Grace E. Huttaff, a descendant of Nantucket whaling skippers and a year-round Island resident. Advertisements published prior to 1843 in the "Inquirer" are quoted with amusing and witty comments.

"Vanished 'Sconset Houses on Nantucket," by Henry Chandlee Forman, with drawings by the author, is a brief survey of how much of the Original Siasconset has changed and what parts of it have disappeared. This is an important article and appropriate for the 300th Anniversary, for in the village of 'Sconset lies the only example of a surviving settlement of the period of the founding fathers, as early Sherburne, Peedee, and Seschacha are gone.

A message from the President, George W. Jones, "It Happened Three Hundred Years Ago," urges every one, as the occasion arises, to give willingly of his effort that the year's celebration will be remembered with pleasure for years to come.

A brief history of the Nantucket Fire Department is illustrated with pictures of the two old hand pumps "Cataract" and "Siasconset No. 1." These are the two old "hand tubs" which will compete this coming summer in a real old fashioned firemen's muster.

The Whaler's Certificate, the Town Seal, and History Making Events are other items of interest. Naturally the issue would not be complete without a schedule of Birthday Events for 1959. This is included as presently set up by the Steering Committee in charge of the celebration.

## Historical Association Council Selects Committees, Chairmen

The Nantucket Historical Association Council held its annual organization meeting at the Friends Meeting House Friday afternoon, July 24. At this meeting various committees and the chairmen of the various museums and buildings were chosen, to serve for the fiscal year ending May 31, 1960, as is customary following the Annual Meeting of the Association members.

George W. Jones, President of the Association, was re-elected chairman of the Council. Stokeley W. Morgan, Albert Egan, Jr., and Richard J. Porter were appointed to serve as the Finance Committee.

Reappointed as Chairmen of the various museums and buildings were: Historical Museum, Mrs. William L. Mather; Oldest House, Mrs. William Perkins; Old Mill, Robert Caldwell; Old Jail, Oswell J. Small, and Whaling Museum, W. Ripley Nelson. Mrs. Franklin Bartlett, welcomed as a newly elected member of the Council, was appointed chairman of the 1800 House, succeeding Mrs. Walton F. Adams who had asked to be relieved of this chairmanship, with which request the Council complied with regret.

Robert E. Deeley was welcomed as a new Council member having been elected at the Annual Meeting to serve in the class of 1963. Mrs. Franklin Bartlett and Mr. Deeley succeeded as members of the Council as Albert Egan, Jr., and Mrs. Cyril Egan, whose terms were completed in 1959, and who, as provided in the by-laws, were not eligible for re-election as councillors.

The Council passed a resolution of appreciation and thanks to Howard U. Chase for the years of faithful service given by him as a Vice-President and member of various committees. Mr. Chase, at his own request, was not re-elected a Vice-President at the Annual Meeting, for, as he explained, his absence from the Island throughout the fall and winter months made it inadvisable for him to continue in office. Mr. Albert Egan, Jr., who, at the Annual Meeting, was elected a Vice-President succeeding Mr. Chase, was welcomed as an officer member of the Council.

President George W. Jones has announced with pleasure that Mrs. Walton F. Adams will continue to serve as Honorary Custodian of Collections and Mrs. William L. Mather as Custodian of Collections.

Mrs. Alma Robbins will continue to serve as Editor, Historic Nantucket, the Association's quarterly publication. Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson will continue to serve as Assistant Editor.

Burnham N. Dell will serve again as Chairman of the Exhibits Publication Committee, and W. Ripley Nelson as chairman of advertising and publicity.

It is anticipated that the personnel of the various committees will be selected and announced at an early date by the various chairmen.

Sept. 2, 1958

Jan 23, 1959



SEPTEMBER 18, 1959

## Nantucket Historical Association Lists Attendance Figures

This week marks the end of the season for visitors to the various buildings and museums of the Nantucket Historical Association, for all, except the Whaling Museum, will be closed by Saturday, September 19. The Whaling Museum will remain open, as usual, through Columbus Day, October 12.

It has been an interesting and successful season, with paid attendance to date of about 33,500 persons or almost 2,000 over all of last year. With the Whaling Museum open another month the increase will be even larger.

It is always interesting to see how the various buildings and museums draw the public from year to year. The comparative results clearly show the vagaries of public interest. This year the Whaling Museum, the Oldest House, and the Old Mill show increased attendance over last year. All three of these exhibits, however, last year (1958) showed decreased attendance over the preceding year, 1957. The Historical Museum and Old Jail, on the other hand, showed decreased attendance this year, compared to a substantial increase for both exhibits in 1958 over 1957.

The Whaling Museum, to September 15, shows paid attendance of 18,524 with 30 days to go before closing, as compared with 17,755 for the entire season last year. The new exhibits, showing whale craft shops, may well account for at least some of the increased interest. It seems quite possible the season's figure may readily challenge the all-time high record of 20,118 paid admissions for 1957.

The Oldest House will show paid attendance of approximately 5,000 persons as against 4,154 for last year. The Coffin Reunion helped to build this increase but general public interest was evidenced also. The Old Mill showed over 3,250 visitors this year for a 450 increase over last year.

When one considers all the attractions and entertainment offered to the public this season under the 300th Anniversary program and the unusually bad weather experienced this summer, the increased paid attendance record for the year, for the Association as a whole, is most gratifying. By mid-October, when the Whaling Museum closes, the paid attendance record for all exhibits for the 1959 season may well challenge the all-time high record of 34,147 achieved in the summer of 1957.

## Museum Visitors 550 Less Than Record

If the popularity of the Whaling Museum provides a reliable index to Nantucket's seasonal prosperity, then Islanders owe an abject apology to the much-maligned Summer of 1959.

According to figures compiled by Mrs. Herbert W. Foye, receptionist at the tourist mecca, 19,568 paid admissions were recorded during the past Summer. That figure is not only the second highest since the Museum's opening in 1929, but is only 550 less than the record high of 20,118 in 1957.

"Paid admissions," Mrs. Foye points out in her report to the Historical Association, "by no means include all admissions. Members and children under 12, accompanied by an adult, are entitled to free admission. While no record is kept of these two categories, they are known to have run into substantial figures."

Although visitors are not required to sign the guest registry book in the Museum's foyer, some 4,600 visitors—about 23 per cent of the total admissions—registered during the past Summer, she said.

Mrs. Foye's figures reveal that 39 states, the District of Columbia and 18 foreign nations were represented by visitors to the Whaling Museum, the repository of priceless relics of Nantucket's past.

Alaska and Hawaii, the two newest members of the Union, were not represented in the Guest Book, although visitors from those states are known to have browsed through the exhibits.

The other nine states not registered and not known to have been represented were Arkansas, Idaho, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

The register reveals, however, that visitors from England, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Australia, Japan, Okinawa, Pitcairn Island, South Africa, Cuba, Puerto Rico and every Province of Canada succumbed to the Museum's spell.

Not all of the visitors have a merely passing interest in the Museum, according to Mrs. Foye. Many of them are engaged in research and the Museum's 133 log books, 152 account books, letter books, day books and invoice books are invaluable references.

"Two especially interested visitors," she recalls, "were those from Pitcairn Island. Direct descendants of Bounty Mutineers and residents of the Island, they examined with more than ordinary interest the log of the ship Topaz, Mayhew Folger, Captain, recording on February 6, 1808, the discovery of Pitcairn Island and the Bounty Mutineers' survivors."

Evidence of the fascination which the Museum holds for visitors, Mrs. Foye emphasizes, is the fact that 63 of them filed application, paid their dues and became members of the Nantucket Historical Association. Of that group, 59 became annual members and four enrolled as life members.

The number of new members is a new record for any one year and far exceeds the average of 22 enrollments per year over the past eight years.

Oct. 23, 1959

## Visitors At Historical Exhibits Hit All-Time High

(Continued from Page One)

Historical Museum and Friends Meeting House: 1961, 3,334; 1959, 3,642; Oldest House: 1961, 4,681; 1959, 5,133; 1800 House: 1961, 1,265; 1959, 1,123; Old Jail: 1961, 2,898; 1959, 1,968; Old Mill: 1961, 4,286; 1959, 3,128.

Paid admissions do not by any means tell the full story as to visitors for members are admitted free, as is also the case of children under 12 years of age accompanied by adults. It may well be said therefore that the season of 1961 showed a healthy normal growth in public interest for all exhibits of the Association.

The Whaling Museum has just received, for exhibition, three fine ship models, namely, "Sunbeam," whaler; "Benjamin Packard," a merchant ship (the last square rig built in the United States in Bath, Maine) and "The Lynx," a Baltimore Clipper ship. These models are meticulously made, including the equipment. They were made by the late S. Milton Clark of Upper Montclair, N. J. who died in 1955. Mr. Clark was a graduate of Columbia University in 1911, as a mechanical engineer. He was associated for many years with George Sharp, Inc., of New York ship designers. He built ship models as a hobby and had an extensive collection of replicas of famous ships of the past.

These models are owned by Mr. Robert T. Leadbetter, whose summer home is on India Street, but who is a resident of Montclair, N. J. These three models are loaned by Mr. Leadbetter for exhibition for an indefinite period of time so the Association has had new show cases built for them in which they are now installed. These models were in Mr. Leadbetter's home in Montclair, N. J., which would ordinarily have presented quite a transportation problem. This was quickly and generously solved by Mr. Leadbetter, who is associated with Curtis Wright Manufacturing Co. at the propeller plant in Caldwell, N. J., and who flies his own plane when traveling between New Jersey and Nantucket.

On Sunday, November 19, together with a friend, he flew two of the models to Nantucket and, on the 26th, the third model. Picked up at the airport, they were promptly transported to the Whaling Museum where Mr. Leadbetter assisted in installing them in the new show cases. In each instance, Mr. Leadbetter flew home the same day. The Association is greatly indebted to Mr. Leadbetter for his unselfish interest in the Association and his generosity in loaning these models and transporting them at his own expense and time for safe delivery to the island.

Two models have been placed on exhibition in the Portrait Room and the third in Sanderson Hall, of the Whaling Museum. They will without doubt attract a great deal of attention from the visitors next season.

1961



## Nantucket Historical Association

announces with pleasure that at the

### Annual Meeting of its Members

**Dr. John P. Martin, BA, LtD**

of Nova Scotia

will speak on

### "Nantucket's Relation to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia"

Members and their Guests

are cordially invited to attend

**FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, FAIR STREET**

**Tuesday Afternoon, July 18, 1961, 3 p.m.**

**ADMISSION FREE**

The speaker of the day was secured through Mr. Guba. He is the Historian of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and has retired from a teaching career. Dr. John P. Martin is in his 75th year and a fine raconteur. He was extremely grateful for the opportunity of visiting Nantucket for it was the whaler who withdrew to Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, after the Revolutionary War who brought economic prosperity and know-how to that little sea coast port.

He conveyed the greetings of the Mayor of the brand new "city" of Dartmouth in the letter which follows:

Through the medium of our local historian, Dr. John P. Martin, I am delighted to take this opportunity of conveying to the people of Nantucket Island our warmest felicitations and kindest greetings, perhaps for the first time in history. Dartmouth is indebted to Nantucket for its first major industry, for it was the prosperous whaling company from your Island that brought their numerous ships to Dartmouth where they set up their whale oil manufactory and built houses for their families. The result was that our struggling 18th Century settlement received a tremendous economic stimulus, both during and after the years that the whaling company remained in our midst.

There is a commemorative plaque in Dartmouth on the site of the Nantucket Whaling Plant of 1785, and during the present summer we are arranging to set up a second plaque marking the spot of the Quaker Meeting House of those years.

Our other associations with early Nantucketers such as the acquisition of some 150 acres of common land, through the efforts of the whaling people, and the recent naming of a thoroughfare called "Nantucket Avenue" cut through the common, will, no doubt, with other stories, be fully related to you by Dr. Martin.

A hearty and a homey welcome will always await any person connected with Nantucket to our new city of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

Yours very truly,

I. W. Akerley, Mayor

As you will see, Dartmouth feels its debt to the Nantucketers who migrated there in 1785 and left in 1792. In that short time they taught the industry to the natives, established homes and factories for oil manufacture, candles, barrels, and such. But the legacy they appreciate to this day was the laying out of "common and undivided" lands — just as was done on Nantucket — for the benefit of the farming populace. Sheep and cattle grazed freely in these areas — which now provide the municipality with a wealth of city property for use as school and recreation areas.

Dr. Martin gave a heartfelt plea to make history "live" for young people. He believes that storytelling in the home and school is one of the best methods of capturing the youthful imagination and channeling it toward pride in historical background and patriotism. To imbue them with a love of the past is to create a good attitude toward the future.

He illustrated this point with a suggested tale of how the little lights of Nantucket whale oil lamps and candles helped light the homes and streets in large centers and stamped out crime which usually breeds in dark places.

He spoke of how "Evangeline" is a Nova Scotia story — yet many young-

sters there do not know the tale. As we oldsters must pass along — let's not let the stories of Nantucket die out.

Dr. Martin owns part of the property where Samuel Starbuck settled in 1784, when a group of 40 families and 150 whalers made an exodus to Dartmouth with its fine deep, sheltered harbor — ideal for a whale fishery port. They found a town impoverished, due to many Indian raids, including a massacre in 1751 which all but wiped out the tiny settlement.

The reason these people went to Nova Scotia was that it was a British colony where they would not have to pay a duty on oil shipments to England as was the case in Nantucket.

Being Quakers and bound not to fight, they went to Dartmouth. However, after a short stay, they were offered inducements by Sir Charles Neville to go to Milford Haven in Wales which they accepted. Not the least of considerations was the warmer climate afforded in South Wales. In both places old Nantucket names are still seen.

Seth Coleman was so clever he could harpoon a whale, dispense medicine, read scripture, or build houses. He stayed in Dartmouth until 1821 when he returned to Nantucket to end his days. It was he who solved the problem of piratical raiding from Sable Island off Nova Scotia by installing government lighthouses at each end of the island.

New Englanders under Colonel Pepperell and Shirley of Boston resolved to knock out the French fort at Louisbourg — built at a cost of \$2,000,000 and considered impregnable — because of the French raiding New England fishing vessels bound for the banks of Newfoundland. This was accomplished.

However, at the end of hostilities, England restored Cape Breton to the French. New Englanders resented this and it turned many of them against the Crown. Louisbourg was rebuilt and once more flattened in 1758 — this time permanently until recent restoration activities for historical purposes as a tourist attraction.

In reprisal, the French, under Admiral D'Anville, set forth from France in 1746 to annihilate Boston. Fortunately for our history the great fleet with 10,000 men fell prey to storms and scurvy or the plague — and only a few survivors reached the shores of Halifax, Nova Scotia, where many died. There is a cairn on Bedford Basin Road to commemorate this event. Thus fate protected our shores.

Dr. Martin also related his experience in the explosion of the steamer "Mt. Blanc" in 1917 when the city of Halifax and Dartmouth were in a state of disaster.

His "Story of Dartmouth" will be in the Atheneum Library before long and will be eagerly read by those who enjoyed his interesting and delightful lecture.

He says the latch string is out for Nantucketers who visit Dartmouth and we of Nantucket can reciprocate the kindness.



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# The Story of Whaling

told in over 180

## Paintings, Prints and Photographs

specially selected from the

## Famous Collection of over 1800 pieces the late Allen Forbes

on loan from

Francis Russell Hart Nautical Museum

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

## This Unusual Exhibit

now being shown at

Coffin School Building — Winter Street

Just off Main Street

Exhibit Hours — Daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Admission — 50 cents per person

Arranged and Sponsored by

## Nantucket Historical Association

### "Story of Whaling"

Last Friday evening the members of Nantucket Historical Association and invited guests were present at the opening of the display of whaling in print, painting, and photograph at the Coffin School on Winter Street.

Archie Cartwright, last survivor of the legions of Nantucket whalingmen, officiated at the ceremony opening the Nantucket Historical Association's summer exhibition, "The Story of Whaling."

Ushered in by a flashing thunderstorm and torrential rains, it seemed as if Mother Nature were cooperating with Charles Flanagan, who sang sea chanteys all evening to the strains of his guitar, in providing a nautical atmosphere for the affair.

Mr. Flanagan sang "Away Rio," "A Rovin'," "Haul Away Jo," "The Golden Vanity," and several other sea chanteys used in setting on the sails aboard ship during whaling days.

Nantucket, once the world's whaling capital, sent out tens of thousands of her sons to battle the sperm whale across the world's oceans for almost two centuries.

Oil paintings, engravings, woodcuts, lithographs, watercolors, pen and ink sketches from England, Germany, France, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium, Japan and America spanning almost 16 centuries of art have been arranged to tell the long story of whaling from its earliest days in primitive societies, through the Dutch and English and American phases, down to the last wooden whaler which sailed out in 1924 to end up wrecked Bay.

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### Illustrated Story of Whaling Opens At Coffin School

An unusual exhibition will be opened to the public at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 1, in the Coffin School Building, according to an announcement just made by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Nearly 180 paintings, prints, and photographs specially selected from the famous collection of over 1,800 pieces gathered from all over the world during his life time by the late Allen Forbes of Boston, tell, in graphic art of 15 centuries the "Story of Whaling." A chronological arrangement of the pictures, which date back to the early Dutch and English whaling efforts, will graphically depict the history of the whaling industry from earliest times.

The Allen Forbes collection was bequeathed to the Francis Russell Hart Nautical Museum of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Through this Institution's generosity to loan  
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the Nantucket Historical Association this selected group of pictures, this unique display became possible.

The Association is especially fortunate in having Allen Forbes, Jr.'s, assistance in selecting the pictures for exhibition and in planning and setting up this valuable and most unusual exhibit.

The Trustees of the Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin School of Nantucket generously gave permission to use the Coffin School building on Winter Street for the exhibition, which insured a good setting and a convenient location. Special set ups and lighting have been arranged to insure the most effective presentation of these pictures for which much credit is due Mr. Forbes, Jr., for his able and thoughtful planning and to the Marine Lumber Company for its co-operation and generous assistance.

The exhibition will be open week days from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. throughout the months of July and August. A small admission fee will be charged. Receptionists will be on duty to greet visitors, to answer questions, and generally help the public to understand and enjoy the pictures exhibited.

A special first showing of these pictures has been arranged by the Nantucket Historical Association on Friday evening, June 30, for which an invitation to attend has been extended to all Members of the Association and a special list of guests including the heads of various museums in New England. Special opening ceremonies have been arranged for that evening.

held in the Coffin School, given to Nantucket by Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin, "for his kinfolk" 135 years ago.

The refreshment committee provided punch and cookies — many of which were cleverly made in the form of whales. Many of the costumed ladies and a few youngsters lent a festive air to the occasion.

A private reception was held later in the evening at 135 Fair Street, where a few guests had the opportunity of meeting members of the Forbes family to whom we are indebted for the privilege of this collection.

More than 150 paintings make up the exhibition which is on loan from the Francis Russell Hart Nautical Museum at Massachusetts Institute of Technology where the form part of the Allen Forbes Whaling Collection consisting of over 1,200 pictures.

Allen Forbes was a banker in Boston whose hobby was collecting pictures and ship models — in fact, anything to do with the sea. His collection outgrew the State Street Trust Company where his work was, and was given to the Francis Russell Hart Nautical Museum at MIT. Nantucket is very fortunate to have on loan from this collection for the summer season such a complete coverage of the ages of whaling as selected by Allan Forbes, Jr., whose artistic prowess is evidenced in the clever arrangement of the whaling sequence. This is in the form of a maze designed by Charles B. Rockwell, III, along with Allan Forbes and Jadwiga Forbes. It follows through from Perseus, who was said to be the first pursuer of whales, and on to the Biblical story of Jonah, to the Aborigines, to the Basques in their pursuit called "Chassant la Baleine", through the Dutch fishery English, and finally the American era, which reached its epitome in the annals of Nantucket whaling. All phases of the chase, cutting in and trying out, are depicted and everyone who is interested in our historic background on Nantucket should attend this exhibit at least once this summer. You will find Mrs. Nancy Adams, whose father, Capt. Charles Grant, was first custodian of the Whaling Museum and a real whaler to boot. She can answer questions concerning whaling and will offer brochures and posters for sale.

The exhibit is appropriately enough



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